

A Love We Can Understand

Glory. We will hear about it in Sunday's Gospel. God will be glorified and will glorify Jesus, and do it right away. But most of us admit that we do not understand what it means to give glory to God.

I was at a concert several years ago in which the audience gave unrestrained glory to three performers, all of it deserved. We thundered applause and shouted and whistled after every song in a two and a half hour concert.

The performers were not much past twenty years old, but they had complete musical mastery. Half way through the concert I noticed that, without intending to, I had been smiling the whole time.

When at last they tried to close the concert, the audience threatened to mob them. One of the performers called out, "Everyone deserves this experience! We are going to line up the whole audience and each of you gets to come up here and have everybody go crazy over you!"

Maybe so, but would we deserve it? The word glory means "very great praise, honor, or distinction bestowed by common consent." Which of us could merit this?

A member of Nickel Creek (which, by the way, is the group I have been speaking about) wrote a song that might show the real meaning of glory. It is called "The Hand Song."^{*} A young boy picks roses for his mother. Trouble is, she has been raising these roses with great care, and he has broken them. The thorns dig into his hands as he brings them to her. She lovingly extracts these thorny reminders of her roses,

and she knew it was love.
It was one she could understand.
He was showing his love
and that's how he hurt his hands.

Some time later, held close on her lap, the boy listened stories from the bible. He saw a picture of Jesus and cried out, Momma, he's got some scars just like me.

And he knew it was love.
It was one he could understand.
He was showing His love
and that's how He hurt His hands.

Finally grown up, the young man is called by Uncle Sam. His "number" is drawn, and he throws himself in front of a friend to shield him from gunfire. He gave his life, a deed he had learned from the roses and the cross. "And they knew it was love. It was one they could understand. He was showing his love, and that's how he hurt his hands."

Would the boy/man qualify for the word "glory" in its usual sense? He learned what love was and he gave it on the battlefield. It is a small story, with no stadiums of people to give applause.

And yet, isn't love the very essence of human life? Jesus says so in this Sunday's Gospel:

I give you a new commandment:
Love one another.
As I have loved you,
so you also should love one another.

This is a love we can understand. Jesus learned what love is and he gave it without reserve on the cross. It hurt his hands. It took his life. The beauty of the pain and death he incurred for others is filled with quiet glory.

Can we love each other as he loved us? We may hurt our hands, but we will be part of his glory.

^{*}*The Hand Song*, by Sean Watkins and his friend David Puckett, Copyright © 2000. From the album Nickel Creek. Congratulations to these men, and on the beautiful words and music.



Prayers Before Mass

When we enter the church, we come into the Presence of the Living God. Take the time before Mass to place yourself in His Presence and to ask for His Mercy for your sins and those of the whole world, that the Sacrifice of the Mass may not be offered in vain.

Most Holy Trinity,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
I adore You profoundly
and I offer you the most Sacred
Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity
of our Lord Jesus Christ,
present in all the Tabernacles of the
world
in reparation for the
sacrileges, outrages and indifference
to which He is everywhere subjected.
Through the infinite merits of His Most
Sacred Heart and the Immaculate
Heart of Mary, I ask the conversion of
poor sinners.

My God, I believe I adore, I trust and I
love You.
I beg pardon for those who do not be-
lieve, do not adore, do not trust and do
not love You.

Chaplet of Divine Mercy

On Rosary Beads pray:
Our Father.....

Hail Mary

I believe in One God....

On the large beads say:

Eternal Father,
I offer You the Body and Blood
Soul and Divinity
of Your Dearly Beloved Son,
Our Lord Jesus Christ
in atonement for our sins
and those of the whole world.

On the small beads say:

For the sake of His sorrowful Passion
have mercy on us and on the whole
world.

At the conclusion say three times

Holy God
Holy Mighty One
Holy Immortal One
Have mercy on us and on the whole
world.

The Healing Touch of Jesus

The Anointing of the Sick is celebrated by a priest and members of the parish community. It can be celebrated in a church, at home, or in the hospital. The sacrament is not an isolated moment; it is a part of the Church's pastoral care of the sick, a ministry of the healing community. In many parishes, the pastor and members of the parish community dedicate themselves to making regular visits to people who are hospitalized or homebound. Visitors from their parishes remind these people of God's presence and invite them to participate in the parish's celebration of the Anointing of the Sick so that the whole community may pray with and for them.

The Scriptures are an important part of the celebration of this sacrament and remind us of God's love and power to heal. The stories of Jesus working wonders in the lives of the sick and the dying give us hope. The Church's reflections on God's healing and the Church's faith in God's mercy help draw us deeper into the mystery of God's love expressed in this sacrament.

The healing touch of Jesus is experienced when the priest places his hands on the head of the person who is sick. Family members and others who are gathered may also touch the sick person. This laying on of hands is accompanied by prayer. The action and words are a way of symbolically lifting up the sick person to the Spirit's healing and are a sign of the community's support in prayer.

Following the laying on of hands, the priest anoints the forehead and hands of the sick person, using oil which was blessed by the bishop during Holy Week. This oil expresses the concern of the whole diocese, the whole Church. As the priest anoints the sick person, he says a prayer asking for the healing comfort and peace of the risen Lord.

Eucharist, the central experience of our sacramental life, is also a part of the celebration of this sacrament. It is a source of nourishment for the healing process. It is also a sign that the sick person shares in the life of the community. If the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is not celebrated in church, the priest and members of the community bring the Eucharist to the person at home or in the hospital.

As with every sacrament, the Anointing of the Sick includes a period for quiet reflection and thanksgiving. The sick person gives thanks for God's presence and for the spirit of healing offered through the ministry of the Church. Others who are present thank God for the witness that the sick persons gives to his or her faith in the Lord.

Excerpted from *Mass and the Sacraments: Celebrating Our Catholic Life* by Fr. Michael C. Benham, Fr. Joseph J. Juknialis, Fr. Kenneth P. Knippel, Fr. Thomas L. Knoebel, and Sr. Alice Ann Pfeifer, CSA. Copyright © 1998 by Hi-Time*Pflaum Publishing, 330 Progress Road, Dayton, OH 45449. Used with permission of the publisher.

Current Events

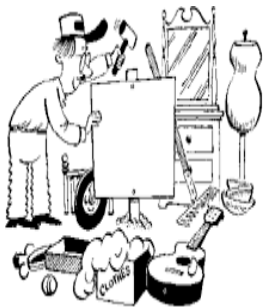
Annual DAUGHTER'S DINNER

Plans are being made for an evening of fellowship, food and fun. Mark your calendars for Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at 6 p.m. for the annual Covered Dish Dinner. Stories, Jokes, readings, etc. will be welcome for the program.

The "Pamper Yourself" Basket Raffle Tickets will be sold on the weekends of May 5th and May 12th.

For information on the Basket, please contact Fran Lipschutz at 756-2468 or Martina Lingobardo at 756-2879.

Reservations for the Dinner are a must! R.S.V.P. to Rachel Gilleran (727-2653), Eileen Hartman (434-2316) or Martina (756-2879).



Memorial Day Rummage Sale

Our Parish will hold its Rummage Sale on Memorial Day Weekend. Items may be dropped off at the Rectory Garage

during Rectory Business hours. We ask that all items be in good repair. **NO CLOTHING!** For more information contact JoAnne Hadnagy @ 727-3441.

WE NEED YOU!

Volunteers, men and women, are needed to make a commitment to visit the sick, shut-in, and bereaved of our parish community. Sign up sheets are located in the vestibules of the churches. This is a great way to show Christ's love and caring in word and deed. Contact Fran Lipschutz (756-2468) for more information.



Remember your Mother this Mother's Day in our Mother's Day Masses.

There is no greater gift you can give your mother for Mother's Day than the gift of being remembered in the Mass. Unlike flowers, this gift will not wilt or fade. Unlike candy, it will not make Mom fat. And if Mom is no longer in this world, the gift of the Mass can reach her where she is in God's Kingdom and bring her comfort and joy that she is being remembered by those she loved so well.

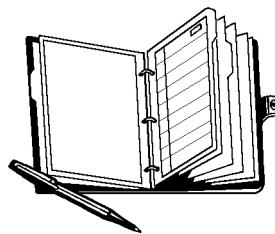
Envelopes for this special use are in your May packets. Please return them to the Parish Office by May 6th for inclusion in our Mother's Day Bulletin. Names turned in after May 6th will not appear in the Mother's Day bulletin.

Robert Gilleran
626 Whipporwill Lane
Largo, FL 33770

Scheduling Mass Intentions

It is Diocesan Policy that all Masses must be said within one year of their being accepted. Our Mass Intention Book contained Masses from the past several years. These Masses have now been scheduled. As a result, there are no week-day dates available for Masses until September and no weekend dates available until October. Masses recently received will begin being scheduled at that time.

If you have a special date when you would like your intention remembered, please try to schedule it a year in advance so that the date can be assured. Too often, people request Masses this week for next week and are upset when the date is already taken.



Happenings

Monday
No Morning Mass
Rectory Office Closed

Tuesday
9 a.m. Mass
Rectory Chapel

Wednesday
9 a.m. Mass
Rectory Chapel

Thursday
9 a.m. Mass
Rectory Chapel

Friday
9 a.m. Mass
Rectory Chapel

Saturday
No Morning Mass

3 p.m. Confessions SM

4 p.m. Vigil Mass
Fifth Sunday of Easter

Sunday
Sixth Sunday of Easter
Mother's Day
8:00 Confessions SP
by request only

8:30 a.m. Sunday Mass SP

9:00 a.m. Parish Religious Education Program—SM

11:00 a.m. Sunday Mass SM

Emily Backer
Helen Burdick
Joan Genneken
Robert Gilleran
Astrid Glodeck
Gert Leahy
Marlene Mazzocchi
Joe Monteforte
Christine Plonski Sezer

Mass Schedule for the Week of May 7th - 13th			
9:00 a.m. unless otherwise	Feast	Intention	Offered by
Monday	Easter Weekday	NO Mass Scheduled	
Tuesday	Easter Weekday	Steven Burdess	Fr. Ken
Wednesday	Easter Weekday	Walter Crak	Wanda Laskowski
Thursday	Bl Damien of Molokai	Alice & Dominic Hopkins	Annette & Barry Corrigan
Friday	Easter Weekday	Louis Mazzocchi	Marlene
Saturday	Sts. Nereus & Achileus	NO Mass Scheduled	
Sixth Sunday of Easter			
Vigil	4:00 p.m. SM	Mother's Day Intentions	Parish
Sunday	8:30 a.m. SP	Mother's Day Intentions	Parish
Sunday	11:00 a.m. SM	Mother's Day Intentions	Parish

Scriptures for the Week	
Monday Easter Weekday	Acts 14:5-18 John 14:21-26
Tuesday Easter Weekday	Acts 14:19-28 John 14:27-31
Wednesday Easter Weekday	Acts 15:1-6 John 15:1-8
Thursday Bl. Damien	Acts 15:7-21 John 15:9-11
Friday Easter Weekday	Acts 15:22-31 John 15:12-17
Saturday Sts. Nereus & Achileus; St. Pancras	Acts 16:1-10 John 15:18-21
Sixth Sunday Of Easter	Acts 15:1-2, 22-29 Revelation 21:10-23 John 14:23-29

Saint of the Week

Blessed Damien May 10

Joseph De Veuster, the future Father Damien, was born at Tremelo in Belgium, January 3rd, 1840. His was a large family and his father was a farmer-merchant. When his oldest brother entered the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts (called 'Picpus' after the street in Paris where its Generalate was located), then his father planned that Joseph should take charge of the family business. Joseph however, decided to become a religious himself. At the beginning of 1859 he entered the novitiate at Louvain, in the same house as his brother. There he took the name of Damien.

In 1863, his brother who was to leave for the mission in the Hawaiian Islands, became ill. Since preparations for the voyage had already been made, Damien obtained permission from the Superior General, to take his brother's place. He arrived in Honolulu on March 19th, 1864, where he was ordained to the priesthood the following May 21st. He immediately devoted himself, body and soul, to the difficult service of a "country missionary" on the island of Hawaii, the largest in the Hawaiian group.

At that time, the Hawaiian Govern-



ment decided on a very harsh measure aimed at stopping the spread of "leprosy", the deportation to the neighboring island of Molokai, of all those infected by what was thought to be an incurable disease. The entire mission was concerned about the abandoned "lepers" and the Bishop, Louis Maigret ss.cc., spoke to the priests about the problem. He did not want to send anyone "in the name of obedience", because he knew that such an order meant certain death. Four Brothers volunteered, they would take turns visiting and assisting the "lepers" in their distress. Damien was the first to leave on May 10th, 1873. At his own request and that of the lepers, he remained definitively on Molokai.

He brought hope to this hell of despair. He became a source of consolation and encouragement for the lepers, their pastor, the doctor of their souls and of their bodies, without any distinction of race or religion. He gave a voice to the voiceless, he built a community where the joy of being together and openness to the love of God gave people new reasons for living.

After he himself contracted the disease in 1885, he was able to identify completely with them: "We lepers". Father Damien was above all, a witness of the love of God for His people. He got his strength from the Eucharist: "It is at the foot of the altar that we find the strength we need in our isolation..." It is there that he found for himself and for others the support and the encouragement, the consolation and the hope, he could, with a deep faith, communicate to the lepers. All that made him "the happiest missionary in the world", a servant of God, and a servant of humanity.

Having contracted "leprosy" himself, Fr. Damien died on April 15th, 1889, having served sixteen years among the lepers. His mortal remains were transferred in 1936 to Belgium where he was interred in the crypt of the church of the Congregation of Sacred Hearts at Louvain. His fame spread to the entire world. In 1938 the process for his beatification was introduced at Malines (Belgium): Pope Paul VI signed the Decree on the "heroicity of his virtues" on July 7th 1977.

In Father Damien, the Church proposes an example to all those who find sense for their life in the Gospel and who wish to bring the Good News to the poor of our time.

Knowing our Faith

Become an Instrument of Healing

1. Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation

To be a sign of healing and forgiveness for others, you should take advantage of the sacrament that can bring healing to you.

2. Participate in Parish Ministries to the Sick.

Begin regular visits to the local nursing home, arrange a group to make cards and small gifts for delivery to parish shut-ins or assist at the celebrations of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick whenever they are held.

3. Start a Ministry of Prayer for the Sick.

Find out who is sick in your community. Ask your friends and neighbors to pray for that person. Invite them to add their own sick to the list. Update the list often.

4. Pray Daily for the Sick

Say a decade of the rosary or pray one of the psalms every day. Offer the troubles of your everyday life for the intentions of the sick and sorrowful.

Mary at Mass

by Rev. Paul Turner

Devotion to Mary remains a hallmark of the Catholic faith. Some people unfamiliar with our religion assume that prayer to Mary forms the backbone of the Mass. Wrong! Prayer to Mary is certainly the backbone of the rosary, but there isn't a single prayer addressed to Mary in the entire Mass, front to back, on any day of the liturgical year.

When it comes to prayer, we acknowledge Hebrews 7:25, which says Christ lives for ever to make intercession for us. So we direct our prayers to God through Christ.

However, because of Mary's central role in salvation history, she makes several appearances in the Mass texts every Mass, every day of the liturgical

year.

Most important, Mary's name is pronounced right in the heart of Mass in the eucharistic prayer. She is called by two titles made mystic by their juxtaposition: virgin and mother. In the second eucharistic prayer for children, she is also called "Mother of God and our mother."

Mary also appears in the Creed, as the virgin who gave birth to the Word made flesh.

At times we celebrate a Mass in her honor, under a title like Mary, Mother of the Church, or to commemorate an event in her life, like the Visitation. A preface often prayed on these days echoes her song of praise, the Magnificat. But most frequently she is remembered as the Virgin Mother.

By connecting these two titles of Mary, the church invites us to reflect on her son. Mary's special role as the Virgin Mother reminds us that the miraculous birth of Jesus introduced the world to an extraordinary child whose miracles would never cease.

At first, the title "Mother of God" sounds wrong. God is the uncreated creator of all. How could God have a mother? That puzzling question draws us into a deeper meditation on the identity of Jesus. Because Jesus is both fully God and fully human, Mary must be called Mother of God.

In the liturgy Mary's role always bows to her son. She gives birth to him not only in time but in the liturgy and in our hearts.

Copyright (c) 1997 Resource Publications, Inc., 160 E. Virginia St. #290, San Jose, CA 95112, (408) 286-8505. Paul Turner, pastor of St. John Regis Parish in Kansas City, Mo., holds a doctorate in sacramental theology from Sant' Anselmo University in Rome. His e-mail is PaulTu@aol.com.

Liturgical Ministers

Saturday, May 12
Vigil of the Sixth Sunday of Easter

Servers

Lectors

EMOC

Sunday, May 13
Sixth Sunday of Easter
8:30 a.m. St. Paul's

Lectors

EMOC

Sunday, May 13
Sixth Sunday of Easter
11:00 a.m. St. Martin's

Servers

Lectors

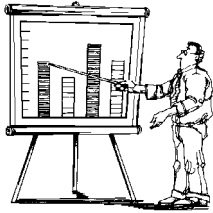
EMOC

Liturgical Minister Classes now forming

Classes for New Ministers of Communion will take place beginning May 20th

Classes for new Lectors will be held in June.

If you are interested in becoming a Server, Lector, or Minister of Communion, please contact Fr. Ken or Betsy Supancik.



Financial Stewardship

“Each person should give what he in his heart has decided to give – not reluctantly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Second Corinthians 9:7

Your Offering last Sunday	
April 29, 2007	
Loose	396.92
Candles	15.50
Offertory SM	1126.00
Offertory SP	442.00
Children's Offering	8.00
Ash Wednesday	10.00
Dues	43.00
Fuel	5.00
Diocesan Assessment	13.00
Initial Offering	5.00
Your offering to the Parish	2,064.42
National Collections	
Rice Bowl Collection	
Holy Land Collection	
Home Missions	491.45
Total National Collections	491.45
Additional Account Deposits	
Mother's Day Remembrance (Stipend)	20.00
Debt Reduction (Building Fund)	172.00
Total Additional Account Deposits	192.00
Total Deposits last Sunday	2,747.87

Parish Checkbook this Week	
Balance Forward 04/27/07	4,109.59
Income	
Loose	396.92
Candles	15.50
Offertory SM	1126.00
Offertory SP	442.00
Children's Offering	8.00
Ash Wednesday	10.00
Dues	43.00
Utilities	5.00
Diocesan Assessment	13.00
Initial Offering	5.00
National Collection: Operation Rice Bowl	
National Collection: Holy Land	
Nation Collection: Home Missions	491.45
Other Income	100.00
Total Income	2,655.87
Balance Forward	4,109.59
+ Income this week	+ 2,655.87
Total Available Funds	6,765.46
Expenditures	
Administration	206.33
Rectory	149.42
Liturgy	
Religious Education	
Plant Operation and Maintenance	154.33
Loan Repayment	
Total Expenditures	510.08
Funds Available	6,765.46
- expenses	-510.08
Balance (03/03/07)	6,255.38

Thank You

Our parish community received a additional gift of \$110.00 toward the building fund in memory of Gertrude Leahy.

How shall I make a return to the Lord for His goodness to me?"



There was a discrepancy in the parish checkbook report last week. The opening balance should have been \$1,892.99 (not \$3,955.81) With an income of \$2,216.56 and no expenditures last week, the balance should have been \$4,109.59 (not \$6,172.37).

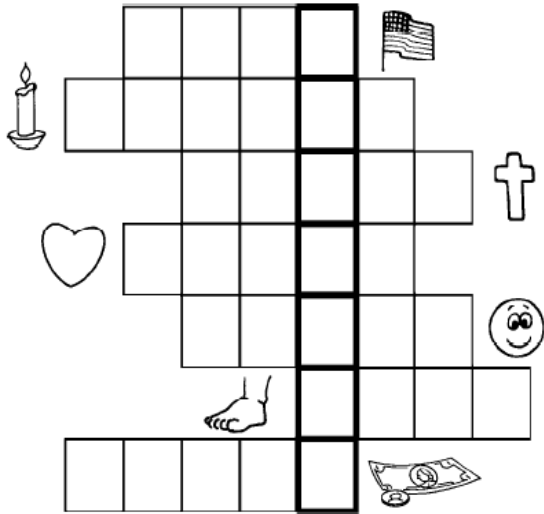
This week's figures are correct.

Jesus and God

Jesus describes His relationship to God by using a special word.

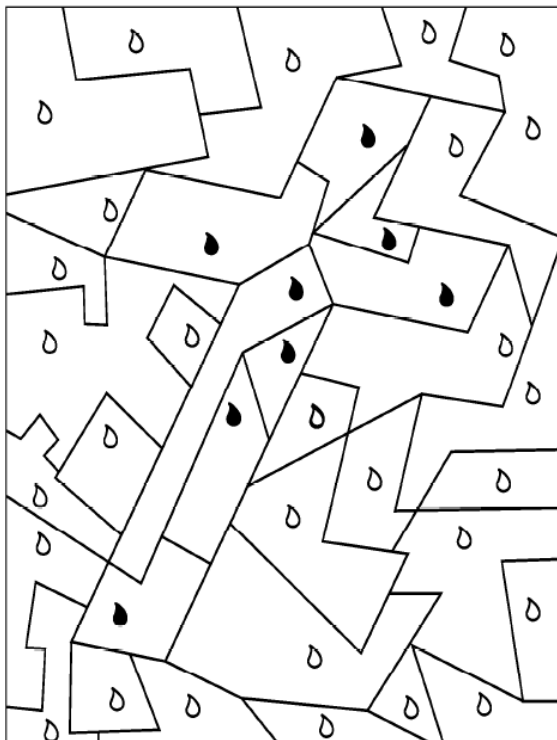
Webster's dictionary definition of that word is: *to give honor to, to exalt, to worship*

Write the name of each picture in the boxes. The darker boxes will spell the word that fits Webster's definition.



Jesus said, "Where I am going, you cannot come."

Shade in the spaces with .



Jesus said, "Love one another."

Match the shapes.



© 2006 CRI • PO Box 36269 Canton, OH 44735 • 800 992-2144 • www.ChildrensBulletins.com



Who should we glorify?



Write the letter missing from the 2nd word in the box. Read the answer from top to bottom.

In <u>GATE</u>	Not in <u>TEA</u>	
In <u>SHOUT</u>	Not in <u>THUS</u>	
In <u>DRAPE</u>	Not in <u>PEAR</u>	

and

In <u>JESTER</u>	Not in <u>STEER</u>	
In <u>POET</u>	Not in <u>TOP</u>	
In <u>SOLEMN</u>	Not in <u>LEMON</u>	
In <u>TUNE</u>	Not in <u>NET</u>	
In <u>NEST</u>	Not in <u>TEN</u>	



The
Parish
Community
of
St. Martin
of Tours
and
St. Paul
the
Apostle

R. R. 1 Box 396
Jackson, PA

Phone:
(570) 756-2541

Fax:
(570) 756-2105

E-Mail:
parish@martinoftours.com

Pastor
Rev. Kenneth M. Seegar

Parish Pastoral Council

Betsy Supancik, Chairperson
Michael Briechle
Mark Fallon
Diane Frye
Rachel Gilleran
Charlene Kempa
Chris Lake
Andrew Whitehead

Parish Finance Council

Michael Briechle, Chairperson
Richard Lake
Robert Lambert
Matthew Menapace
Russ Pepe
Rita Reavey
Betsy Supancik,

Religious Ed Program

Chris Lake, DRE
Charlene Kempa
Alfie Lambert
Maureen Maloney
Diane Monteforte
Amber Rockwell
Ruth Zeck

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.martinoftours.com

Olde Church Emporium

Rt. 92 S. Jackson

Antiques bought and sold

Furniture Home Décor Miniatures Candles

Gifts God knows what you'll find there!

Visit our Café and Bake Shoppe.

Café Bake Shoppe Tea Room Brunch-
Lunch Afternoon Tea

Baking Bread, Pies and Savories to Order

Open all year Thursday—Sunday 10—5

All Major Credit Cards Accepted

Deborah McNamee, proprietor

or visit us online at

www.oldechurchemporium.com

Chocolates by Irene

570-562-2007

Specialty chocolates for all occasions

All our chocolate is made to order to insure quality and freshness.

Order today for your special event!

Bridal or Baby Shower Easter Christmas
Birthday Party or any special occasion

Lisa Winners Beauty Salon

Susquehanna (570) 853-2727

New Milford (570) 465-5353

Full Hair Care and Nail Salons

Susquehanna Small Engine Sales, Service and Repairs, Inc

Home of service and reasonable prices.

We have the same price or less as the big home
improvement stores, but we service what we sell.
We carry everything from chain saws to garden
tractors and everything in between.

Husqvarna and Stihl products available.

We repair all small engines

Located on Rt. 171 between Susquehanna and
Great Bend
570-853-4694

Tom McNamara – owner and parishioner

If you bring this ad in,

10% off every purchase of \$100-\$500.

5% of any purchase over \$500.00.

Corinna Kinney—Licensed Manicurist

at the Hair Zoo in Clifford

222-3400 or 289-4169

Manicures - Pedicures - Pink & Whites - Acrylics - Gels
Repairs & Wraps - Nail Art & Piercing - Natural Nail Care
Hand/Arm Massage - Foot/Leg Massage - Airbrushing -
Paraffin Dips

HOMEBOUND CARE AVAILABLE

*Gift Certificates, Birthday Parties, Gift Packages
Wedding/Bridal Services, Manicure/Pedicure Parties*

Boot—A—Pest

Licensed Residential & Commercial

Pest Control Service

Mortgage Wood destroying Inspections

Ants—Mice— Spiders-Bees and Much more

Over 17 years experience

Jeff Owens

Phone 570-281-9410

Catering for all Occasions

ARMETTA'S PIZZERIA & PUB

Exit 219 off Rt 81

Gibson, PA

(570) 465-5492

or visit our other location

Armetta's Restaurant

329 Northern Blvd

Chinchilla, PA

(570) 586—5492

Hadnagy's Mountain Hideaway

Guest House

Frank and JoAnn Hadnagy

P. O. Box 9 -Stack Rd.

Thompson, PA 18465

Phone: 5707273441, Fax: 5707272193

E-Mail: mthdwy@epix.net

Website: mountainhideaway.net

Carpet-Vinyl-Tile

The Carpet Catalog

Box 173, Jackson Ave.

Thompson, PA 18465

Sales and Installation

(570) 727-3350

Hours: M-F 10a.m.—5 p.m., Sat. 9a.m.—1 p.m.



Signs of a Call to the Religious Life

Love of God that manifests itself in a desire to give one's life as a witness to the immensity of God's love for all people

Desire to live simply

Ability to relate with a variety of people, to be happy alone or in a group

Joy in serving others in any outreach or parish involvement

Generosity

Ability to listen to others and accept direction when needed.

Desire to love expansively rather than needing an intimate relationship with one person

Desire to grow in union with God through prayer and service to the needy.

St. Joseph the Worker

"May Day" has long been dedicated to labor and the working man. Pope Pius XII expressed the hope that this feast would accentuate the dignity of labor and would bring a spiritual dimension to labor unions. It is eminently fitting that St. Joseph, a working man who became the foster-father of Christ and patron of the universal Church, should be honored on this day.

The texts of the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours provide a catechetical synthesis of the significance of human labor seen in the light of faith. The Opening Prayer states that God, the creator and ruler of the universe, has called men and women in every age to develop and use their talents for the good of others. The Office of Readings, taken from the document of the Second Vatican Council on the Church in the modern world, develops this idea. In every type of labor we are obeying the command of God given in Genesis 2:15 and repeated in the responsory for the Office of Readings. The responsory for the Canticle of Zechariah says that "St. Joseph faithfully practiced the carpenter's trade. He is a shining example for all workers." Then, in the second part of the Opening Prayer, we ask that we may do the work that God has asked of us and come to the rewards he has promised. In the Prayer after Communion we ask: "May our lives manifest your love; may we rejoice for ever in your peace."

The liturgy for this feast vindicates the right to work, and this is a message that needs to be heard and heeded in our modern society. In many of the documents issued by Pope John XXIII, Pope Paul VI, the Second Vatican Council and Pope John Paul II, reference is made to the Christian spirit that should permeate one's work, after the example of St. Joseph. In addition to this, there is a special dignity and value to the work done in caring for the family. The Office of Readings contains an excerpt from the Vatican II document on the modern world: "Where men and women, in the course of gaining a livelihood for themselves and their families, offer appropriate service to society, they can be confident that their personal efforts promote the work of the Creator, confer benefits on their fellowmen, and help to realize God's plan in history" (no. 34).

Excerpted from *Saints of the Roman Calendar* by Enzo Lodi

Vocations: How Is God Calling Me?

by *Fidelis Tracy, C.D.P.*

To be created is to be called by God. The mystery of vocation or call is part of God's love for me. I remember learning as a small child in religion class that God loves me and keeps creating me day by day. So I am convinced that God's creating me is both a gift and a call. I respond to God's love and God's call by becoming more visibly the image of God that I am.

In this *Update* we will take a closer look at this notion of calling, or vocation, especially in relation to the specialized callings of ordination and religious life. It is important to remember, though, that everyone is being called by God. These specialized vocations of ordained and religious life can only be understood in that context. Everyone in the Church is called to help nurture these particular vocations of service to the People of God. So this *Update* is not only for those who are considering religious life or ordained ministry, but also for parents, grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles—indeed everyone in the Church who is seeking God's ongoing call or who is nurturing God's call in others.

How do we know we are following our call to holiness? It will manifest itself when we become like Jesus: compassionate, forgiving, loving and healing toward others. If I think about the people in my life whom I would readily call holy, I would think of neighbors who reached out to those in need when it was not convenient or those who were concerned about suffering people in poor countries. Or I might associate holiness with courage in adversity, a courage that comes from faith. Holiness is manifested in selfless love, forgiveness and service.

Everyone has a vocation

We may think we know each other well, but our knowledge of each other only goes so far. In our depths each and every one of us is in touch with the mystery of God. At the core of each person is a call, or vocation. It is a call to holiness, to becoming a living response to God's love. Call is common to everyone, yet responding to God's love is meant to be unique and particular for me. Knowing myself and being honest about my dreams and capabilities are the first steps in discovering how I am called to live out my vocation to holiness.

Discovering the mystery of God's calling for me is not like solving the mystery laid out in a novel or TV series. God is not cleverly trying to trick me into suspecting the wrong choice is the right one. As a matter of fact, God is so gracious that as I choose any direction, there are before me a multitude of paths toward my goal of union with God.

As I try to discover whether God is calling me to holiness through marriage or single life, as a priest, deacon or member of a religious community, it is important to remember that my call is not a narrow plan that God is hiding from me. Being relaxed and trusting that God loves me and always gives what I need for my salvation will help me discern my call in a healthy way.

Ministry is not for a chosen few but is mandated by our Baptism. And every ministry, married or celibate, involves service. The service required of me may be a specifically Church-related ministry such as religious education or pastoral care of the sick. Or it may be service of the poor in a soup kitchen, serving the sick as a doctor or nurse, or caring for children or an aging parent. As a baptized Christian I participate in the life and mission of Jesus by attending to the needs of others.

There is a misconception that one becomes a member of a religious community in order to work in a parish, school, hospital, social service organization or as a missionary to a Third World country. All these ministries can be done by persons who are not members of religious communities.

