



Saint Lawrence with the gridiron

The feast of the beloved Roman deacon and martyr, Saint Lawrence (225-258), is celebrated this Wednesday. Above is a 5th century portrayal in mosaic of the deacon Saint Lawrence approaching a gridiron over fiery coals on which he was to be martyred. After the pope had been killed, the governor of Rome ordered the deacon to hand over the treasure of the Church.

Lawrence, who was deeply concerned with his diaconal service to the poor, presented the poor of the city as the Church's treasure. The angry governor had him roasted on a gridiron. After suffering for a while, the cheerful deacon called out that he could be turned over now, for he was done on that side. Thus he showed contempt even for his sufferings in the face of the triumph of heaven.

Also in this depiction of the cheerful witness of the Gospel is a cabinet with the four books of the Gospel which he faithfully proclaimed. The rich dark blue ceiling, covered with bright stars, and the barrel vaults represent the dome of heaven.

mosaic, a small part of the complete series of mosaics lining the interior walls and ceiling of the mausoleum of Galla Placidia (about 450 AD) in Ravenna, Italy

the 19th Sunday in the Year

August 7, 2016

Saint Bernadette Parish

Saint Mary Parish

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

602 Marietta Street
BREMEN, OH 43107
(740) 569 • 7929

stbernadetteparish.net

Sacramental Life

BAPTISM

When a child is baptized, the parents must be registered and have attended 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. The next session will be Wednesday, Sept 14. **They are encouraged to take the class before the child is born.** If you are expecting, call Kathy to register for the class.

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; they are in the same wonderful boat as you are.

At least one parent must be a practicing Catholic.

Both godparents need to be practicing Christians, at least one a practicing Catholic, neither a non-practicing Catholic.

If you don't attend Sunday Mass regularly, you can do something about it: Start coming to Sunday Mass. If you can't come (health, severe weather, employment requirements, etc.), speak to your confessor. He can help you.

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.

In addition to Advent and Lenten Penance Services, 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

The Sick receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick **when dangerously ill, facing major surgery, or suffering 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 the sick for "health of mind and body."

Penance, Anointing, and Holy Communion are brought to the homes or hospitals of the sick or shut in. **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 sacramentally should contact the parish office six months before they wish to celebrate the sacrament. **This sacrament, not just the ceremony, requires serious preparation.** And **the Church needs to be involved** in that preparation. She tries to support couples through the years of their married life. For this reason our diocese offers programs to enhance married life. To learn how, watch the weekly bulletin.

Our Parishes

AT BOTH PARISHES

Fr Thomas Kessler	pastor	(614) 634-0499	<i>wnthomaskessler@icloud.com</i>
Kathy Kehnast	pastoral coordinator	(740) 654-1893	<i>stbermparish@yahoo.com</i>
Angie & Kent Kerns	religious education	(740) 654-2588	<i>kwkerns@gmail.com</i>
Julie & Chase Stalford	youth ministry	(740) 808-7294	<i>maristellaspirit@gmail.com</i>
Nikki Schmelzer	bookkeeper	(740) 654-1893	<i>businessmstbparish@yahoo.com</i>

AT BREMEN ST MARY PARISH

Ben Factor	liturgical music		<i>b_factor@lancaster.kl2.oh.us</i>
Jim Schmelzer	maintenance chair		
Tyna Fox-Schmelzer	religious education	(614) 371-7702	<i>schmelifox@earthlink.net</i>
Bremen St Vincent de Paul		(740) 569-3710	

The St Mary Parish office is at the church vestibule.
Hours are 9-11 AM, Tu. 569-7929
602 Marietta St, Bremen, OH 43107

AT ST BERNADETTE PARISH

Deacon Mark Scarpitti		(740) 438-3970	<i>dcn.mark@frontier.com</i>
Deacon Jeff Carpenter		(740) 681-9918	<i>Carpenter.277@osu.edu</i>
Ann Essman	pastoral minister	(740) 653-9347	<i>aessman001@att.net</i>
Steve Huber	facilities coordinator	(740) 654-3137	<i>shuber57@yahoo.com</i>
Liz Latorre	liturgical music	(740) 243-1872	<i>lizlatorre@gmail.com</i>

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

AT ST BERNADETTE SCHOOL

Pam Eltringham	principal	(740) 654-3137	<i>peltring@cducation.org</i>
Barb Huber	secretary	(740) 654-3137	<i>bhuber@cducation.org</i>

Saint Bernadette School is at 1325 Wheeling Rd, Lancaster, OH 43130-8701
www.stbernadetteschool.com *stbermlan@cducation.org*

let us pray

THE 19TH SUNDAY

Almighty ever-living God, whom, taught by the Holy Spirit, we dare to call our Father, bring, we pray, to perfection in our hearts the spirit of adoption as your sons and daughters, that we may merit to enter into the inheritance which you have promised.

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.

AND WITH POPE FRANCIS IN AUGUST

His universal intention is about sports:
That sports may be an opportunity for friendly encounters between peoples and may contribute to peace in the world.

His evangelization intention is about living the Gospel:
That Christians may live the Gospel, giving witness to faith, honesty, and love of neighbor.

in both our parishes

thank you!

Father Varghese Srambickal, VC, a Vincentian Missionary priest from India, and all the Vincentian Missionaries thank you for your prayers and generous mission offering last Sunday. St Mary parishioners gave \$607; St Bernadette parishioners gave \$2,453.

Your offerings will help them to carry out their many missionary, educational and charitable activities in their missions and will help them educate young men studying for the priesthood. If you did not have an opportunity to make an offering or would like to make an additional offering, you may make your offering through the general parish collection **in a specially marked envelope**.

Thank you for your prayers and generous financial support. If you would like to sponsor a seminarian and help him to become a priest, you may write Fr Francis Cheruparampil VC, Mission Procurator, PO Box 45, Hazlet, NJ 07730 or email Fcheru@aol.com.

rcia — who is this month of Sundays for?

The Catholic Faith has beautiful and true answers to the questions people ask about the meaning of our lives. Are you or is your husband or wife or a friend searching for that meaning? Do you want to find deeper unity for your marriage and family? You or someone you know may want to learn what this Faith has to offer. Not the cartoon image of Catholicism that a hostile society presents, but the Faith of the Church herself. Sometimes a person already Catholic wants to find out what it is really all about. It can be anyone, in any circumstance of life.

The RCIA (**Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults**) helps such folks to find what they are looking for. Many people don't know of this vital resource—unless we tell them. It is not a matter for insistence or pressure. It is a sharing, an invitation that is respectful. **The invitation** will be much more attractive when extended by **someone willing to accompany the quester** along the way.

People who have benefitted personally from the RCIA experience are urged to gather with the inquirers, serving as sponsors and mentors of various kinds, to help them, if it is God's will, to become grafted onto the life of the Catholic Christian Church.

RCIA in our parishes will meet on **Sunday evening for about a month of Sundays**, beginning on August 21. That is only a few weeks away.

Call Kathy at 654-1893 on Tuesday morning at Bremen St Mary or any other weekday morning at St Bernadette for information.

get ready for Mass

If it is something special, we get ready for it. That goes for Sunday Mass. The most important way to get ready is to be in—or get into—the *state of grace* so that we can receive Holy Communion worthily. Then we need to *fast* (a tough word for a very easy task) for at least an hour before we receive Communion. And we could try to prime the pump, as it were, for hearing the Word of God as it will be read that day by *reading and pondering that little portion of the Word* of God. Those are matters of spiritual readiness.

But to go to Mass is to approach the great sacramental mysteries, approaching physically as well as spiritually. Old-fashioned rural Protestants were on to something when they spoke of wearing their “Sunday-go-to-meetin’ clothes.” We could all **dress up** a little bit, not to show off our fancy wardrobe but to “do something beautiful for God.” And think of what we say to our kids before a trip or before a film or a concert: We tell them to **go to the bathroom ahead of time**. Emergencies can happen to just about everybody. And each of us has the health she / he has been blessed with. But with a little extra precaution we could be (and help others to be) even more single-minded about worship and to avoid the procession to and from the rest rooms. Thanks for thinking about all these things.

help the Church in latin america

Today we will take up the collection for the Church in Latin America. Your gifts to the collection will fund catechesis, pastoral programs, marriage and family life projects, seminarian education, and many other necessary programs in Latin America and the Caribbean. By funding these programs, the support you give today will provide seeds to grow the faith for years to come. Please support the Church in Latin America and be generous in today's collection. For information, visit www.usccb.org/latin-america.

Mass times and intentions

at St Bernadette		at St Mary	
4 PM	John Simon	Saturday, Aug 6	
		Sunday, Aug 7	8:30 AM for the people
11 AM	for the people	Sunday, Aug 7	
8:20 AM	Donna Abbott	Monday, Aug 8	
		Tuesday, Aug 9	8:20 AM Charles & Regina Kessler
8:20 AM	Ben Thimmes	Wednesday, Aug 10	
6 PM	Margaret Kessler	Thursday, Aug 11	
8:20 AM	Carl Messerly	Friday, Aug 12	
4 PM	Anna Alonso	Saturday, Aug 13	
		Sunday, Aug 14	8:30 AM for the people
11 AM	for the people	Sunday, Aug 14	

bishop's annual appeal 2016

“be his hope to others”

Here are the results at our parishes after fifteen weeks.

	St Bernadette	St Mary
households participating	141	61
total pledged	\$ 38,180	\$ 21,210
average gift	\$ 271	\$ 348
total paid	\$ 19,130	\$ 5,845
parish BAA goal	\$ 43,136	\$ 12,703

The Appeal **supports our parish schools of religion and the education of our future priests and deacons, and many families in need of our help**. Your gift and your prayers will help to make this year's appeal a success. The Diocesan Goal is \$6,300,000. Every contribution counts; every dollar that we raise over the stated goal will be returned to our parishes to benefit our communities directly.

We are blessed with much; let us remember the needs of others, as well as the needs of our own parishes.

st bernadette

eucharistic adoration

St Bernadette Parish has **solemn exposition** of the Blessed Sacrament at 9 AM on **Wednesdays**. We have commitments for people to keep watch for the time from 9 AM until 1 PM. We could **extend exposition further into each Wednesday**. If you can commit to a regular presence for adoration for an hour from 1-2 or from 2-3, call Kathy at the parish office.

You can come to church to adore Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament **any day during the daylight hours**.

st bernadette school registration

St Bernadette School looks forward to registering students from St Bernadette and St Mary Bremen parishes for next school year. We accept enrollment for new students grades K-5, and 3, 4, and 5-year-old preschool students. Bring a copy of their birth or baptismal certificates. St Bernadette **preschool** offers kindergarten-readiness goals, within a flexible schedule.

Elementary grades (full-day-kindergarten through 5th grade) offer a program of academic excellence and positive experiences. Make St Bernadette School your **“primary” choice for a really Catholic Education!** For information, call the school office at 654-3137.

scholarships

Income-Based EdChoice Expansion Scholarships allow more students to attend St. Bernadette School. Students, meeting the income eligibility (e.g.: family of 4, income \$48,600), can attend St.

Bernadette School next fall **at no cost** to parents, thanks to 8000 vouchers available from the Ohio Department of Education. Scholarships are available for kindergartners, 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders. This is a **great opportunity for single parents, one-income homes, fixed-income households, and working families**. Every family can explore this possibility. Contact the school office for information.

st vincent de paul:

5th sunday on the 1st Sunday — today!

We usually welcome members of the St Vincent de Paul Society to **receive your donations after Sunday Mass** on the fifth Sunday of the month (in those rare months when there is a fifth Sunday). But last week, they graciously accepted a postponement of their welcome to collect from us because we had a guest missionary priest — from the **St Vincent** Congregation of priests and brothers in India. So we **have postponed the fifth Sunday collection until today**. Please continue your generous giving to St VdP. The St VdP Society operates entirely on voluntary donations and on income from their store (viz, not from subsidies by the Church or any government agency). So please be especially generous.

august blood drive

Our next St Bernadette Blood Drive happens Saturday, Aug 13, from 9 AM-2 PM. **This summer has been a hard one for blood donations in the US**. Besides the normal slowdown in donations, natural disasters such as flooding in Texas and West Virginia have reduced the supply. Consider donating the gift of life. Age for donation is 16 (with parental signature) and up. Lunch and cupcakes as usual! To make an appointment to donate call Joyce Guenther at (740) 974-5040 or go to [www . redcrossblood . org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) (sponsor code SBP). If you can't donate blood, **volunteers are always welcome**, and it's a good way for students to get community service hours.

knights of columbus

There will be an August K of C Corporate Communion at St Bernadette at the 11 AM Mass today. Notice that this date is a change at the request of the Knights from the originally scheduled date later in the month.

ministers at Mass at st bernadette

	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion	
Saturday, Aug 6 4 PM	Tara Craaybeek	Clara & Susan Craaybeek, Analisa Waibel	Susan Garrett Kathy Kehnast Sandy Landefeld	Denise McGuire Brad Rider Craig Shaw
Sunday, Aug 7 11 AM	Robert Christy	Samantha Kerns, Drew Solt, Daniel Turner	Nancy Griffith Ben Peters Larry Sanford	Teresa Scarpitti Valerie Shaw Julie Whitehead
Monday, Aug 8 8:20 AM	David Shonk	Kendall Cox, Joey Mannella	Pat Dreyer	Kathy Kehnast
Wednesday Aug 10 8:20 AM	Bob Christy	Addy Myers, Carley Matson	Mary Guinan	Mary Jane Vajen
Thursday, Aug 11 6 PM	Kathy Kehnast	Cady Tipple, Gunner Robertson	Lee Guinan	Mary Guinan
Friday, Aug 12 8:20 AM	Jim Merk	Mallory & Mitchell Ortiz	Jim & Rita Merk	
Saturday, Aug 13 4 PM	Marguerite Grimm	Eve Darfus, Isabelle Gentile, Dominic Neighbor	Terry Carpenter Tara Craaybeek Jim Kuhn	Becky Kuhn Mary Steyaert Shelia Taylor
Sunday, Aug 14 11 AM	Dennis Forquer	Brooke, Bryson & Zachary Vogel	Pat Dreyer Lee Guinan Jim Merk	Rita Merk David Shonk Becky Wickham

fisher catholic book donation project

Please help Fisher Catholic students Emma Marcinko, Emma Burley and Madeline Wohrer with their Junior Service Project from Saturday, Aug 6 thru Saturday, Sept 3. By donating new or gently used books you are helping underprivileged children grow academically in their school and community. Drop off boxes are located in the main vestibule and school hallway at St Bernadette. Thank you for donating to a great cause.

parish contributions

The *St Bernadette offertory collection* for July 31 came to \$5,937.

bremen st mary

news about the parish school of religion

Thank you all for supporting our Parish School of Religion (PSR) Program. The children are filled with the joy and love of Christ and we appreciate the opportunity to be your partner in teaching them more about their faith. Please watch for registration forms in the parish hall and return by August 29.

We are excited for this upcoming PSR year with Sarah Borah as a new voice to the children for the weekly group faith discussion. Tyna is working to improve communications to families and staff. We have an abundance of teachers and are happy to announce this year's teachers:

Pre-school, K & 1 st	Angi Skinner
2 nd grade	Wyatt Borah
3 rd & 4 th grade	Shawna Kunkler & Cody Schmelzer
6 th & 7 th grade	Jerry & Tyna Schmelzer

The parish is grateful to our teachers from last year for their dedication and time:

Sarah Borah, Shawna Kunkler, Angi Skinner, Cody Schmelzer, Jerry & Tyna Schmelzer, and Nikki Schmelzer.

Others who have assisted our program, whether for set up/clean up, special programming, or assisting with programming:

Wyatt Borah, Cody Fyffe, Angie & Kent Kerns, Sydnee Rogers, Tony Schmelzer, Dismas & Jodie Schmelzer, Abby Skinner, Pam Redding, and Angel Springer.

ministers at mass at bremen st mary

	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Communion	gifts	sacristan / usher
Sunday, Aug 7 8:30 AM	Paul Kunkler	Brooke Holt, Jillian Wilkinson	Irene Kunkler, Leo Kunkler Sr, Jim Schmelzer	Paul Kunkler family	Jim Schmelzer
Tuesday, Aug 9 8:20 AM	Jim Schmelzer				Jim Schmelzer
Sunday, Aug 14 8:30 AM	Linda Qualls	Caelie Bell Abby Skinner	Neil Boch, Pam Redding, Angi Skinner	James Noll Jr family	Joe Young

parish contributions

The St Mary offertory collection for July 31 came to \$1,191.

summer square dance

St Mary Parish will have a square dance at Schmelzer's Grove for the family next Sunday, Aug 14, from 7-9 PM Cost is \$3 @ person.

gardening for our parish

If you would like to help landscape and maintain the yard of St Mary, contact Kathy Kehnast to volunteer.

st vincent de paul

St Vincent de Paul members will be collecting donations after Mass today. Your generous support is always appreciated.

in the diocese of columbus

retrouvaille

If your marriage is troubled and stressed, unloving or uncaring; if you have grown cold and distant; if you are separated, or are thinking about it, don't give up. **Retrouvaille** (a French word that means "rediscovery") is a program to help heal and support married couples experiencing difficulties, loneliness or pain. It is also for separated or divorced couples wanting to try again. The next program is Aug 1-3. For information call (614) 296-9704 or visit www.retrouvaille.org.

spousal prayer: a way to marital happiness

A Retreat for Married Couples happens on Saturday, Aug 27, from 9 AM to 4 PM at Immaculate Conception Church in Columbus. It features celebration of Mass and a reflection by Bishop Frederick Campbell and presentations by Deacon James Keating, author of *Spousal Prayer: A Way to Marital Happiness*. Cost is \$65 per couple, which includes a light breakfast, lunch and *Spousal Prayer* book. For information and to register, call (614) 241-2560.

help needed

The Sisters of Children of Mary just excavated 4 acres of land and they need help **clearing trees and building permanent pastures** for their cows at their convent in Newark. Any day is fine. Call (740) 323-1977. Find information at www.childrenofmary.net.

men's retreat at the shrine

The Catholic Laymen's Fall silent retreat happens at St Therese Retreat Center from 6 PM on Friday, Sept 9, through noon Mass on Sunday, Sept 11. In reflection sessions, **Fr Stephen Hayes OP** will help men to appreciate the value of the medieval crusades by developing his theme "**Taking up the Cross: Becoming Modern Crusaders for the New Jerusalem of Christ.**" Cost is \$130. For information and registration contact Charles Kielkopf at (614) 268-0175 or kielkopf.1@osu.edu.

get your marriage in shape

Are you exercising and dieting, jogging, swimming, and playing tennis to stay fit and trim? What are you doing to keep your marriage in good shape? Why not **try a Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend**? The next weekend in central Ohio is Nov 11-13. For information or to register, contact Paul or Marilou Clouse at (614) 834-6880 or visit www.wmcecolumbus.org.

catholic youth summer camp

Catholic Youth Summer Camp (CYSC), a ministry based in our diocese, is a 6-day and 5-night experience providing students with a week full of **high adventure activities and high adventure faith**. CYSC is open to all students entering grades 6-12, and there are 8 sessions available this summer. CYSC offers a truly Catholic and safe environment with daily catechesis that awakens faith and builds missionary disciples. A week at camp includes daily Mass, adoration, reconciliation, small group conversations, worship, service, and authentic community. For information, visit www.cysc.com.

catholic family night at crew stadium

Catch great soccer action at the Catholic Family Night with the Columbus Crew SC on Saturday, Aug 27, kick off at 7:30 PM. Upper sideline seats are \$19, lower sideline seats are \$28. All tickets are subject to a \$3 processing fee, are limited and subject to availability. Deadline to order tickets is Wednesday, Aug 10. For ticket information, contact Katherine Wren at kwren@thecrew.com; for other questions, visit the Recreation Association website at www.ceducation.org/diocesanrecreation or contact Marty Raines at (614)241-2580.

Courage

Do you have a same-sex attraction and desire to live a life of authentic friendship, rooted in chastity? You are not alone. **Courage** provides spiritual support for Catholic men and women with a same-sex attraction, who strive to live chaste lives in accordance with the teachings of Christ and his Catholic Church. Visit www.couragerec.net.



living mercy in a jubilee year

mercy: beating heart of the gospel

Have you **memorized** these works of mercy? Have you been practicing them? Pope Francis writes that **“Mercy is the beating heart of the Gospel”** (Misericordiae Vultus). **We seek God’s mercy** because we know he **is full of mercy** and is overflowing **generous with his mercy**. His only **requirement is that we, in turn, be** mercy saying “please” and gratefully saying “thank you”. You know in what need of his mercy you are—even when the mercy given **merciful**. So what we need to do is go to God, humbly seeking his isn’t exactly what you had in mind (“You don’t always get what you want, but sometimes you get what you need!”).

But **crucial to that thanksgiving is actually living mercy yourself**. The Church helps us along in that by teaching us the works of mercy. To live mercy, we must (re)discover both

the **spiritual works of mercy**,

- counsel the doubtful
- admonish sinners
- forgive offences
- instruct the ignorant
- comfort the afflicted
- bear patiently those who do us ill
- pray for the living and the dead,

and the **corporal works of mercy**,

- feed the hungry
- clothe the naked
- heal the sick
- give drink to the thirsty
- welcome the stranger
- visit the imprisoned
- bury the dead.

Learn all 14 by heart. Post them where you’ll see them often, on your refrigerator or your mirror or someplace. Then make it your daily aim to live them. Examine your conscience about them. It’s not always easy. But the works of mercy are a must for anyone who seeks to follow Christ. They will bring you joy ... and bring you to eternal joy.

pray in church

You can come to church to adore Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament **any day, during daylight hours** at either St Bernadette or Bremen St Mary. The front doors of both churches are unlocked during the day. People praying in church are welcome to **turn a light on** when it’s needed. They are also urged to **turn off lights** when they aren’t necessary.

fisher catholic high school: advisory board

The pastor must appoint two new members to the FCHS advisory board to advise the administration of the school. A person does not need to be a Fisher parent or alumni. The main requirement is that an adult parishioner be a practicing Catholic member of St Bernadette Parish who is concerned about how Fisher can continue in support of the high school’s mission to help parents educate their young to be faithful Catholic Christians, good citizens, and good husbands or wives, good fathers or mothers.

The term of service is two years. Interested applicants should contact Fr Kessler during August.

fisher fall festival

The Fisher Fall Festival happens Friday, Sept 9, from 5-10 PM and Saturday, Sept 10, from 5-11 PM. Enjoy inflatables, children’s games, adult games of skill, K of C Fish Fry, Bob’s Backyard Barbeque, a beer garden, and other entertainment. Contact Eileen Gundelfinger at (740) 277-7063 with questions.

in the deanery

confessions & weekday Mass nearby

These times sometimes change, though, so call ahead

parish	confessions	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Bremen St Mary	8 am Sunday		8:20 AM				
Lancaster St Bernadette	5:30 Thursday 3 PM Saturday; 8:30 AM on 1 st Sat	8:20 AM		8:20 AM	6 PM	8:20 AM	1 st Sat 9 AM
Lancaster St Mary	4 PM Saturday	7 AM	9 AM	7 AM	9 AM		
Lancaster St Mark	5:30 PM Saturday	8 AM	8 AM	6 PM	8 AM	8 AM	
Sugar Grove St Joseph	½ hour before Mass	8 AM	NOON	8 AM	NOON	8 AM	
Circleville St Joseph	4 PM Saturday	9 AM	7 PM	9 AM		9 AM	10 AM
Logan St John	4 PM Saturday	8 AM	8 AM	9 AM		8 AM	9 AM

the Church’s plan for reading God’s word this week

Sat	Aug 6	Nineteenth Sunday	Wisdom	18:6-9	Heb	11:1-19	Psalm	33	Luke	12:32-48
Mon	Aug 8	St Dominic	Ezekiel	1:2-28			Psalm	148	Matthew	17:22-27
Tues	Aug 9	St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross	Ezekiel	2:8-3:4			Psalm	119	Matthew	18:1-14
Weds	Aug 10	St Lawrence	2 Cor	9:6-10			Psalm	112	John	12:24-26
Thurs	Aug 11	St Clare	Ezekiel	12:1-12			Psalm	78	Matthew	18:21-19:1
Fri	Aug 12	St Jane Frances de Chantal	Ezekiel	16:1-63			Isaiah	12	Matthew	19:3-12
Sat	Aug 13	Sts Pontian & Hippolytus	Ezekiel	18:1-32			Psalm	51	Matthew	19:13-15
Sun	Aug 14	Twentieth Sunday	Jeremiah	38:4-10	Heb	12:1-4	Psalm	40	Luke	12:49-53

When an Adult Thinks about the Catholic Faith

Our parish RCIA program meets each Sunday night during the school year to learn our Faith. You could come to it. Maybe you could bring along someone you care about. Maybe you should. That someone is not very likely to come if you don't invite him or her.

Funny thing about the Catholic Faith: You have to think about it. Is that a good thing or a bad thing? I think it is a good thing. This doesn't mean that to be a Catholic you have to be super smart or super well informed. It means that you have to use the intelligence God has given you. And you have to get better informed. Always better and better informed. Not informed with a whole lot of arcane details of information, but informed with the depth and beauty of the Word of God and with the Church's living out that Word.

RCIA for our two parishes starts each week at St Bernadette on Sunday at 7 PM and lasts for about an hour and a half. We usually begin with a snack and some visiting, then continue with a catechesis, break for a stretch, and continue with questions or loose ends or what have you, then try to be careful going home. That's the picture.

Who attends? Well, the primary people are adults who want to be baptized and become Catholic Christians. These are soon called **catechumens**. Then there are those other Christians who want to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church. These are the **candidates**. Other participants are **Catholics** who, for whatever reason, weren't sufficiently catechized and need to fill in the gaps in their formation for a fuller participation in the sacramental life. Some people come who already know the ordinary things about the Faith but want to **know more**.

Among this last group there are Catholics who want to help the new folks entering the Church or entering into the full communion of the Church. These are the **sponsors**, and they take on a vital role of **mentoring** one of the new folks, accompanying him or her on the way to the sacramental initiation. Their role is important, but it can also be very rewarding. They sit with the individuals they are sponsoring during the sessions, make an effort to get to know them, exchanging phone numbers or email addresses so that they can help the new people with questions that might occur to them.

The **sponsors are not ordinarily chosen from among family members** of the potential new members. Catholic **family members** or **friends** are indeed urged to attend the sessions with their relatives; their involvement matters. But it is important for the new folks to have other guides too, so that the Church can provide an additional, more objective presence and help introduce the person into the wider community life of the parish. It isn't that they are better than the husband or wife or whomever, just that they can provide something extra.

How often does a person need to attend the RCIA sessions? Wrong question, if by it you mean "Is there a 'cut' system?" You can't learn Faith if you learn 2 out of 3 of the persons of the Holy Trinity, or 6 out of 7 of the sacraments, 90% of the commandments, or just some of what the Our Father talks to God about. (In fact those four things give a structure to the catechesis, based as it is on the Creed, the Sacraments, the Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer.

Our parish RCIA program meets **each Sunday evening during the school year** to learn – or learn more about – our Faith. The pastor is the ordinary main **catechist**. The presence of sponsors and various other knowledgeable parishioners is a **big**—and necessary—help. The meetings are **in the Blue Room of the Mary Good Center**, behind St Bernadette Church. But this is the RCIA for **St Mary Parish in Bremen**, too. This is to avoid duplicating efforts and to provide a larger pool of participants. But the separate and special identity of each parish is not set aside.

Please join us for the RCIA. And please bring someone with you, if you can. You will be glad you did.

... And When a Child Does

I saw a parish bulletin the other week—from a parish far away—that had an announcement about "RCIA for Children." That means "Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults for Children." And that makes me want to say, "Make up your mind! For adults or for children?" I suppose I shouldn't be objecting to other people's parish life. After all, they are getting on with the preparation of children to come into the Catholic Church. And that's what our parish has to do, too.

But it is a kind of holy initiation, common to the children and the adults, an initiation, through sacramental rites, into the dying and rising of Christ. This means being born again in water and the Holy Spirit into the Trinitarian life of God, becoming the Father's daughter or son, a member of Christ's own Body, infused with his Holy Spirit. That is a bracing and very adult thing to do. And an adult must know, to the best of her or his ability, what she or he is doing. And children know in a different way from adults. Some Christians would say they should come back when they are grown up and have a grown up's way of understanding. But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for it is just such as these that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs."

So when there are children involved who want to know the Faith but who have to make up for a little lost time, there is need of an "RCIC," a program of Christian Initiation for children. It must be a serious initiating, but it has to be for them.

Well this year we have at least one (so far) child, well into the catechizing years, who needs to be catechized in the ways of our Catholic Faith. Like the adults, this young fellow will need to learn the ways of our Catholic Faith: how we believe (Trinitarian), how we worship (sacramentally), how we need to behave (according to the Law of Christ and his Church), how we pray (to Our Father, but ... saying what?).

Are there other **youngsters seeking this initiation**? And are you **someone who could be a catechist for a brief session each week**? Please let us know.

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