

## Saint Bernadette Parish

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

## Saint Mary Parish

*602 Marietta Street*  
**BREMEN, OH 43107**  
(740) 569 • 7738



### **Peter Baptizing the Centurion Cornelius**

a scene from a today's first reading

## The Sixth Sunday of Easter

*May 6, 2018*

## St Bernadette Parish

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

[stbernadetteparish.net](http://stbernadetteparish.net)

cover picture: **Peter Baptizing the Centurion Cornelius**

## St Mary Parish

602 Marietta Street (740) 569 • 7738  
BREMEN, OH 43107

Painted (1709) in oil on canvas by Francesco Trevisani (1656-1746)  
in the Palazzo Pianetti, Iesi, Italy

### our parishes

**Fr Thomas Kessler** (614) 634 • 0499 [wnthomaskessler@icloud.com](mailto:wnthomaskessler@icloud.com)  
*pastor*

at St Bernadette Parish

**Jeff Carpenter** (740) 681 • 9918 [carpenter.277@osu.edu](mailto:carpenter.277@osu.edu)  
*deacon*

**Mark Scarpitti** (740) 438 • 3970 [dcn.mark@frontier.com](mailto:dcn.mark@frontier.com)  
*deacon*

**Ann Essman** (740) 653 • 9347 [aessman001@att.net](mailto:aessman001@att.net)  
*pastoral minister*

**Steve Huber** (740) 654 • 3137 [shuber57@yahoo.com](mailto:shuber57@yahoo.com)  
*facilities coordinator*

**Angie & Kent Kerns** (740) 654 • 2588 [kwkerns@gmail.com](mailto:kwkerns@gmail.com)  
*religious education*

**Liz Latorre** (740) 243 • 1872 [lizlatorre@gmail.com](mailto:lizlatorre@gmail.com)  
*liturgical music*

The St Bernadette Parish office is in the Mary Good Center,  
across the back parking lot from the school.  
Hours: 9 AM-1 PM, MWThF; 11 AM-1 PM, Tu.  
1343 Wheeling Rd NE, Lancaster, OH 43130-8701 (740) 654 • 1893

<http://stbernadetteparish.net>

at Bremen St Mary Parish

**Ben Factor** [b\\_factor@lanaster.k12.oh.us](mailto:b_factor@lanaster.k12.oh.us)  
*liturgical music*

**Sarah Borah** [sborah920@gmail.com](mailto:sborah920@gmail.com)  
*religious education*

The St Mary Parish office is at the church vestibule.  
Hours: 9-11 AM, Tuesdays.  
602 Marietta St, Bremen, OH 43107 (740) 569 • 7929

at both parishes

**Stephen Karnes** (740) 654 • 1893 [stbernbook@gmail.com](mailto:stbernbook@gmail.com)  
*business manager*

**Kathy Kehnast** (740) 654 • 1893 [stbernparish@yahoo.com](mailto:stbernparish@yahoo.com)  
*pastoral coordinator*

**Julie & Chase Stalford** (740) 808 • 7294 [maristellaspri@gmail.com](mailto:maristellaspri@gmail.com)  
*youth ministry*

Saint Bernadette School

**Pam Eltringham** (740) 654 • 3137 [peltring@cdeducation.org](mailto:peltring@cdeducation.org)  
*principal*

**Barb Huber** (740) 654 • 3137 [bhuber@cdeducation.org](mailto:bhuber@cdeducation.org)  
*secretary*

Saint Bernadette School is located at  
1325 Wheeling Rd, Lancaster, OH 43130-8701  
[stbernlan@cdeducation.org](mailto:stbernlan@cdeducation.org)  
[www.stbernadetteschool.com](http://www.stbernadetteschool.com)

Bremen St Vincent de Paul (740) 569-7738  
Lancaster St Vincent de Paul [www.svdplancasteroh.com](http://www.svdplancasteroh.com)  
Diocese of Columbus [www.columbuscatholic.org](http://www.columbuscatholic.org)  
Angels Nurture & Disciple (AND) [www.angelsAND.org](http://www.angelsAND.org)

### sacramental life

#### Where

Our parishes are where Catholics worship. We can receive the Anointing of the Sick at any appropriate place from the appropriate minister. First reception of Eucharist and of Penance as well as reception of Baptism, Confirmation, and Matrimony may only be in one's own parish church, unless with good reason the pastor deems it necessary to do otherwise.

#### Baptism

To have a child baptized, parents must register and attend 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. Try to attend before the child is born. If you are expecting or if you somehow haven't gotten around to having an older child baptized, call Kathy to make plans now.

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; those parents are in the same wonderful boat as you are.

At least one parent must be a practicing Catholic. Both godparents need to be practicing Catholics. If you don't attend Sunday Mass regularly (a major component of being a practicing Catholic!), there is something you can do about it: Start coming to Sunday Mass.

#### 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.

Every Catholic priest is available whenever there is a need. There are Penance opportunities for St Bernadette School children four times in the year so that they will learn the beauty of frequent confession. The Church's law requires us to receive the Penance at least once a year.

#### Anointing and Care of the Sick

The priest gives the Anointing of the Sick to one who is dangerously ill, facing major surgery, or suffering from 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 you for "health of mind and body."
- The priest brings Penance, Anointing, and Holy Communion to the sick or shut in. It is very helpful to 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 should contact the parish office six months before a wedding. Why so long? Because this sacrament, not just the ceremony, requires serious preparation. And the Church needs to be involved in that preparation. Catholics who marry outside the Church have left the sacramental life and need to change that situation before receiving the other sacraments. The Church needs to support couples through the years of married life. That's why our diocese offers programs to enhance married life. To learn about these programs, watch the weekly bulletin.

## At Prayer with the Church

### The Church Prays at Mass today

Grant, almighty God,  
that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy,  
which we keep in honor of the risen Lord,  
and that what we relieve in remembrance  
we may always hold to in what we do.  
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.

### Mass Intentions This Week

May 7, Monday	8:20 AM	St Bernadette	Bryan Mathias
May 8, Tuesday	8:20 AM	Bremen St Mary	David Sheeran
May 9, Wednesday	8:20 AM	St Bernadette	Fr Don McCarthy
May 10, Thursday	7 PM	St Bernadette	for those being confirmed
May 11, Friday	8:20 AM	St Bernadette	Walter Wallace
May 12, Saturday	4 PM	St Bernadette	Leo & Loretta Schmelzer

### Hear God's Word

May 6 6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	Acts 10:25-48	Ps 98 1 John 4:7-10	John 15:9-17
May 7, Monday	Acts 16:11-15	Ps 149	John 15:26-16:4
May 8, Tuesday	Acts 16:22-34	Ps 138	John 16:5-11
May 9, Wednesday	Acts 17:15-18:1	Ps 148	John 16:12-15
May 10, Thursday <i>Saint Damien of Molokai</i>	Acts 18:1-8	Ps 98	John 16:16-20
May 11, Friday	Acts 18:9-18	Ps 47	John 16:20-23
May 12, Saturday <i>Sts Nereus &amp; Achilleus; St Pancras, martyrs</i>	Acts 18:23-28	Ps 47	John 16:23-28
May 13 Ascension of the Lord	Acts 10:25-48	Ps 47 1 John 4:7-10	John 15:9-17

### Pope Francis Asks Us ...

to pray this month that the lay faithful may fulfill their specific mission, by responding with creativity to the challenges that face the world today.

### May is Mary's Month

Mary is the mother *par excellence*! She is the Mother of God and our Mother. Making May her month is a fairly modern step; it isn't found in the ancient liturgical calendars, although there is a feast of the coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven (May 31). But **if you had been casting around for a good time to celebrate a month for Mary, May might well have been your choice.** It is a beautiful month (even if you have allergies). Winter is decidedly over, the fields and trees are green, lots of flowers are in bloom, cattle are back in the fields. It is **a month of new life and of hope.** That fits.

At St Mary Parish (*her* parish) we will pray the rosary every Sunday morning in May before the 8:30 AM Mass.

At St Bernadette Parish (*her dear young friend's* parish) we will continue to pray the rosary before the 11 AM Mass.

### May She Rest in Peace

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Agnes Gins** of St Bernadette Parish who died this week.

+

### Prayer for Our Diocese

Good and gracious God,  
we praise and we thank you for the many graces  
that you have showered upon us over the past 150 years  
in this Diocese of Columbus.

You have brought together faithful men and women  
from many cultures, races, and ethnic groups,  
and through your Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit,  
have molded them into one Catholic Church.

With gratitude, we remember those who have gone before us  
for their commitment, prayer, and work.

We honor their inheritance with our own devotion to the Faith  
and with a desire to pass it on to another generation.

We give thanks as well for all those  
devoted clergy, religious brothers and sisters, and lay people  
who have served the diocese so well.

Through the continued gift of your love and wisdom,  
stir up in us a lively faith,  
a devotion to the worship of your great name,  
and a desire to serve others,  
as we await in hope the great day of the coming again  
of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

For 150 years, you, O God, have been  
our guide and inspiration.

We beseech you to remain with us  
on this journey of life and faith.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## Both Parishes

### Anointing the Sick

We will celebrate the **Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick at Sunday Mass next week.** You should be anointed if you are

- a Catholic, age 7 or older,
- in the state of grace, and
- suffering serious health problems —
  - (like chronic or dangerous diseases,
  - old age, or
  - the prospect of major surgery).

Determine before Mass begins if you will receive the sacrament, sit in the front row or at the end of the pew, and come to the altar when you are called (or notify an usher to ask the priest to come to your place in the pew if coming forward is difficult). Everybody else: Pray for our sick. Keep them in your prayers.

### Happy Mother's Day

Participate in the PDHC's **Baby Bottle Campaign** by collecting your loose change **from Mother's Day (next Sunday) to Father's Day** to help local parents and would-be parents in need. Spare change from baby bottles goes a long way to continue offering free pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, material assistance and life-affirming programs to strengthen families. Grab a bottle and bring it back on Father's Day. Let us give thanks to our father and mother for choosing life and help a local family do the same.

### Catholic Homeschool

Do you homeschool? Are you looking for a curriculum stamped with an imprimatur, recognized by the Catholic Church, to teach your children in a co-op setting? Lancaster Catholic Schoolhouse offers a Catholic-based core curriculum including science lab and

art classes. They also offer Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a Diocesan approved religious education program. Contact Holly Vail @ stmarkhomeschool @ gmail . com or (614) 352-6357.

## The Sacraments of Initiation !

Pray for our parishioners who this Easter Season have received or are about to receive the Sacraments of Initiation:

### already baptized Christian and now received into the full Communion of the Catholic Church and Confirmed from St Bernadette

Savannah Dalton

### to be Confirmed this Thursday from St Bernadette

Jane Uhl,	Olivia Carbol	Susan Craaybeek
Alexis Cymanski	Eve Darfus	Sam Finck
Mary Frazier	Leo Gauerke	Hunter Jamison
Katelyn Jarrell	Joshua Latorre	Olivia McCormick
Nick Pechar	Brennan Quaintance,	Luke Sharp
Emily Taylor	Jack Tencza	Brooke Vogel
Diana Woo		

### from Bremen St Mary

Brooke Holt

### from Sugar Grove St Joseph

Mina Gronbach	Janessa Hoover	Kolton Kilbarger
Julia Ribo	Elizabeth Cooperrider	

### received Holy Communion for the first time from St Bernadette

Ellie Barringer	Ella Reed	Ella Sanford
Flora Woo	Christopher Fitzgibbon	

### from Bremen St Mary

Kara Borah	Christopher Springer	Mason Holt
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Also pray for several others who are at various stages of preparation for entry into the Church later. And pray for the grace for yourself to welcome and invite others to the sacramental life!

## St Bernadette Parish

### Happy Birthday

St Bernadette's former pastor Monsignor Robert Noon celebrates his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday on May 15. May also marks the 67<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. He is living in a rather active retirement at the Villas of St Theresè. If you would like to send him a card, his address is 5253 E Broad Street #127, Columbus, Ohio 43213.

### Very Newly Baptized!

Welcome and pray for St Bernadette's newest Christian, **Xavier Michael Stalford**, son of Chase and Julie Stalford, who was baptized on Sunday, Apr 29.

### Entering St Bernadette School

St Bernadette School **invites you to register your children now** for grades preschool through 5<sup>th</sup> for the 2018-2019 school year. Private tours and classroom observations are available at any time. Want to send your children to a fine Catholic school like St Bernadette, St Mary's middle school, or Fisher Catholic High School, but you wonder about the cost? Assistance is available. For information, call the school office at (740) 654-3137.

The **preschool program** offers a progressive learning approach, and kindergarten-readiness goals, within a flexible schedule.

**Elementary grades** (full-day kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade) offer

a highly respected program of academic excellence and positive experiences.

St Bernadette School offers a full day **kindergarten program** that fosters the academic, social and emotional growth and development of each child in a very family-friendly environment. Studies show that the advantages of a full-day program far outweigh a half-day, including but certainly not limited to, full-day kindergartners learning more literacy and mathematics than those in half-day programs.

### Ministry at Mass at St Bernadette

+	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion
May 5 at 4 PM Saturday, Vigil 6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	Pat Gins	Samantha Kerns, Logan & Tori Loy	Terry Carpenter Susan Garrett Joyce Guenther Denise McGuire Mickey Steyaert Kathy Wagner
May 6 at 11 AM 6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	Dennis Forquer	Abby, Mary & Sam Frazier	Larry Sanford Anna Sevigny David Shonk Mary Jane Vajen Becky Wickham Amy Woo
Monday, 8:20 AM	Mary Jane Vajen	Isabelle Lazar Kyndra Nagle	Pat Dreyer Kathy Kehnast
Wednesday, 8:20 AM	Bob Christy	Daschel Neighbor Amelia Robertson	Angie Christy Mary Jane Vajen
• There will be no Confessions or 6 PM Mass on Thursday this week. •			
Thursday, May 10 7 PM Confirmation Mass	Tara Craaybeek	Confirmation Servers	Rosalie DeFillippo Angie Kerns Priests Deacon Carpenter Deacon Scarpitti
Friday, 8:20 PM	Jim Merk	Morgan Cox Olivia Reynolds	Rita Merk Mary Jane Vajen
May 12 at 4 PM Saturday Vigil of the Ascension of the Lord	Becky Kuhn	Mallory, Mason & Mitchell Ortiz	Bob & Angie Christy Jim Kuhn Sandy Landefeld Brad Rider Craig Shaw
May 13 at 11 AM Ascension of the Lord	John Hartig	Anna Hartig, Brooke & Bryson Vogel	Pat Dreyer Teresa Hartig Jim & Rita Merk Ben Peters Jean Robertson

### St Bernadette Blood Drive

Our next Red Cross Blood Drive is scheduled for Saturday, May 19, from 9 AM-2 PM in the parish hall. There will be lunch and cupcakes—and other pleasant surprises!—for all our donors. Since the first birthday drive in 2007, **we have collected over 1000 units of blood**, saving up to 3000 lives. Call (740) 974-5040 or go to [www . redcrossblood . org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) to make an appointment or sign up to donate. The need for blood is constant—every two seconds someone in the US needs blood. Each day the American Red Cross must collect approximately 14,000 units of blood to meet the needs of patients at 2,600 hospitals and transfusion centers.

### Shawl Ministry

The St. Bernadette Shawl Ministry seeks to provide **comfort to bereaved and seriously ill friends**. If you are interested in crocheting shawls for our parish, call Terry Carpenter at (740) 681-9918. Yarn is provided and lessons are available for those who would like to learn to crochet.

## Bremen St Mary Parish

### Vacation Church School

St Mary Parish will host children from parishes all over our area for a week of fun, learning, and prayer at a very special Vacation Church School again this summer, on the evenings of June 18-22, at **Schmelzer's Grove**. Anyone (from either parish!) interested in helping should contact Sarah Borah at (740) 569-7738.

### Ministry at Mass at St Mary

+	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Communion	gifts	sacristan / usher
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter May 6 at 8:30 AM</b>	Barb Van Fossen-Cook	Spencer Conrad, Isaac Schmelzer	Leo Kunkler Sr, Tyna Schmelzer-Fox, Barb Van Fossen-Cook	Leo & Shirley Ruff	Barb Van Fossen-Cook
<b>Ascension May 13 at 8:30 AM</b>	Joe Young	Reagan Conrad, Nicole Terry	Angi Skinner, Jim Schmelzer, Cathy Young	Joe & Cathy Young	Jim Schmelzer

## Around Central Ohio

### Dealing with the Opiate Addiction Epidemic

For **resources and suggestions** for families, schools, and parishes to respond to the opiate addiction epidemic in Ohio, visit [www.columbuscatholic.org/drug-awareness](http://www.columbuscatholic.org/drug-awareness) or contact the Social Concerns office at (614) 241-2540.

### Jubilee of Marriages

For all married couples celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, 35<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, 45<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 55<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup>, (and every year thereafter) anniversary, the Jubilee of Anniversaries 2018 will be held on Sunday, June 24, at St Andrew Church, 1899 McCoy Rd, Upper Arlington, at 2:30 PM. The occasion will begin with Mass celebrated by Bishop Campbell followed by a reception. Registration forms are available through the parish or register online at [columbuscatholic.org/marriage-ministry-1](http://columbuscatholic.org/marriage-ministry-1) or by calling the Marriage & Family Life Office at (614) 241-2560 x 5. RSVP by Wednesday, June 13. Names of couples registering before June 13 will be featured in the event program and *The Catholic Times*. Other couples will receive their certificate in the mail after the event.

### Pilgrimage to Alabama

St Gabriel Radio's pilgrimage **to EWTN and the Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament** in Alabama is filling up fast. All-inclusive pricing: bus transportation, lodging, tours, and meals. The bus leaves on Wednesday, June 27, at 7 AM and returns on Saturday, June 30, at 6 PM, departing from 4747 Sawmill Road. For information or to register, visit the radio website or contact [colleenl@stgabrielradio.com](mailto:colleenl@stgabrielradio.com) or (614) 459-4820.

### Put (a) Spring in Your Step

That's what you'll have after a **Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend**. The next two weekends in Central Ohio are July 13-15 and Sept 14-16. Marriage Encounter is where married couples can get away from jobs, kids, chores, and phones and focus only on

each other. For information or to apply, contact Paul or Marilou Clouse at (614) 834-6880 or visit [www.wmcecolumbus.org](http://www.wmcecolumbus.org).

### Weekly Confessions & Masses

But these times sometimes change, so call ahead!							
parish	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Penance
<b>Bremen St Mary</b>		<b>8:20 AM</b>					<b>8 AM Sun</b>
<b>Lancaster St Bernadette</b>	<b>8:20 AM</b>		<b>8:20 AM</b>	<b>6 PM</b>	<b>8:20 AM</b>	<b>9 AM 1<sup>st</sup> Sat</b>	<b>5:30 PM Thu, 3 PM Sat, 8:30 AM on First Sat</b>
<b>Lancaster St Mary</b>	7 AM	9 AM	7 AM	9 AM			4 PM Sat
<b>Lancaster St Mark</b>	8 AM	8 AM	6 PM	8 AM	8 AM		5:30 PM Sat
<b>Sugar Grove St Joseph</b>	VARIES	12 PM	7 AM	12 PM	12 PM		½ hour before Mass
<b>Circleville St Joseph</b>	9 AM	7 AM	9 AM		9 AM		4 PM Sat
<b>Logan St John</b>	8 AM	8 AM	9 AM		8 AM	9 AM	4 PM Sat
<b>Fisher Catholic HS</b>					2:40 PM		2 PM on First Fri

### Our Franciscan Friends Celebrate May

The Franciscan Sisters TOR invite you to celebrate their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary at an **Open House and May Crowning** on Saturday, May 19, at their monastery at 369 Little Church Road, Toronto, Ohio. This family fun day includes pony rides, hayrides, a petting zoo, and face painting, along with a "*Battle of the (Praise) Bands*" from 11 AM to 1:30 PM. Bands from various area churches will perform. Lunch is free. May Crowning will be held outdoors at 1:30 PM and the Pentecost Vigil Mass at 4 PM. No reservations necessary; donations are gratefully accepted. For information, visit [www.FranciscanSisterSTOR.org](http://www.FranciscanSisterSTOR.org) or call (740) 544-5542.

### Irish Alumni Golf

**Alumni of St. Mary, Bishop Fenwick and Fisher Catholic High Schools** will play at Pleasant Valley Golf Course on Saturday, June 9, at 9 AM at \$150 per team. For information and to check availability contact Molly Neighbor at (740) 654-1231 or [mneighbor@cducation.org](mailto:mneighbor@cducation.org).

### Catholic Devotion to Mary

The Jubilee Museum in Columbus will host Fr Thomas Blau OP of St Patrick Church on Thursday, May 17, as he discusses the Biblical basis of Catholic devotion to Mary. Doors will open and light refreshments be provided starting at 6:15 PM. Then Fr Blau will speak at 7. Admission is the regular Museum admission of \$10 for adults and \$5 for students and seniors.

### A Job

#### ... in Upper Arlington

St Andrew Parish in Upper Arlington seeks a full time **youth minister** to direct a program for parishioners in grades 6-12. Job offer is contingent on the successful passing of the mandatory background screening and completion of the VIRTUS "Protecting God's Children" course. Send cover letter, resume, and references by Monday, May 7, to Monsignor Stephen Moloney at [smoloney@columbuscatholic.org](mailto:smoloney@columbuscatholic.org)

### ... in Sugar Grove

St Joseph Sugar Grove announces an opening for the **part-time** position of **parish secretary and /or business manager**. The secretary coordinates the day-to-day activities of the parish, facilitates all clerical aspects of the parish office, and produces the weekly parish bulletin. The business manager serves the pastor in administration, personnel, finance and facilities needs. This position requires three to five years previous office management experience or equivalent combination of education and experience. One or two persons may be hired. Inquire to Father Walter at (740) 746-8302 or stjosephsugargrove @ gmail . com.

### The Difference Between Giving Birth and Giving Life

**Angels Nurture and Disciple, AND** (formerly known as The Guardian Angels Program, gaP), is a support program serving single women struggling with an unexpected pregnancy. As an extension of pregnancy care services, AND provides the single mom with a loving network of women (Angels) that will walk alongside her as she journeys through her pregnancy, birth, and infancy of her baby. Recognizing the numerous obstacles single

parenthood presents, AND celebrates **her courage in choosing life for her unborn baby**, and hence strives **to break down any educational, financial, and emotional barriers that are preventing her from becoming the mother God intended her to be**.

If you have the desire to serve a mother during her time of crisis, become a part of this nurturing mission that is transforming lives and therefore generations to come. AND cannot function without the core strength provided by their volunteer base, the Choir of Angels. Angels have many roles, all critical to the support network. If you enjoy mentoring, cooking, caring for babies, hosting baby showers, writing letters of support, transporting and more, they need you!

Whether you have 1 hour @ month or 10, there is a need for you. Every mother is a gift to her baby; help AND show her just how much. For information, contact Monica Flynn at (614) 353-6765 or monica @ angelsAND . org.

*Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love*

—Saint Mother Teresa

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## The Bishop's Annual Appeal Begins Today !

### This Year's Theme: *Sharing His Love, Encouraging Hope*

The BAA is a diocesan appeal for financial support. Your gift to the BAA will directly support these critical areas of need:

- Quality Catholic education for our children through tuition assistance, capital repair grants for high schools, and operating aid for schools.
- The education and formation of seminarians discerning and answering the call to the priesthood.
- The vital work of serving parish catechetical leaders in parish and school religious education programs.
- Marriage preparation and enrichment programs supporting the vocation of traditional marriage, natural family planning programs, and family faith formation events.
- The formation and ministry of permanent deacons in our diocese.
- The education, spiritual cultivation, and evangelization of our multi-ethnic Catholic communities and the parishes serving them.
- The coordination of all liturgies presided at by Bishop Campbell, and sponsorship of diocesan events such as the Rite of Election and adult Confirmation.
- Unified programs for youth and young adult ministry that deepen the faith and involvement of our younger generations.

### Ways to Give

Please support the Bishop's Annual Appeal that begins today. The BAA extends the ministry of the Church in all **the 23 counties of the Diocese of Columbus**. St Bernadette has been asked to raise \$36,305 and St Mary has been asked to raise \$13,121. We can do this if each household will make a pledge. Any amount we give over that goal will be refunded to our parishes.

Consider **not** making a **one-time donation**. Instead, make a pledge for a gift that is given in installments over a longer period. If you give what is available in your pocket today, that will be nice, but it will not have the generosity or the impact of a pledge sustained through monthly or quarterly gifts throughout the year. The diocese will send reminders. And you will be able to do more for the Church.

**The sooner everyone makes a pledge**—or lets us know your plans, the sooner we can conclude this appeal. If you can't give on May 6, please make your **pledge the following week**. If you are not going to make a pledge this year, please indicate that on the pledge card. Thank you. God will bless you for your generosity.

### Our Goals

The diocesan goal is	\$	6,750,000.
For St Mary it is	\$	13,121.
For St Bernadette it is	\$	36,305.

### Appeal Prayer

Gracious and loving God,  
we are ever grateful for the many gifts  
which you have bestowed upon us.

We are especially thankful, dear Father,  
for the gift of your Son, Jesus.

May his Sacred Heart help us  
to know your infinite love for us,  
and may it give us the courage  
to continue his work in the world by

**sharing his love and encouraging hope.**

We pray that you will help us all respond to your love  
by imitating your generosity,  
as we consider the needs of all those living in our diocese.

May we touch the lives and hearts of others  
by our participation in this appeal.

May you send your Holy Spirit to dwell with us always,  
so that all we say and do will give you fitting praise.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

# Priests: Are We Running Low ... or Running Out?

There is some good news in our local church. The sad part about it is that it should be so exceptional. Later this month, Bishop Campbell will ordain five priests for the diocese of Columbus. Last year there was only one. But forty-four years ago, when I was ordained, there were seven of us. We need a lot more.

And this year, some of our priests will die. Some, myself included, are retiring from active ministry in our diocese. (Notice I said “from active ministry”: **they will be priests of Jesus Christ until the day they die—and into eternity**, but they will not continue working as pastors in parishes.) Taken together, the lack of ordinations, the retirements, the aging of all of the priests, and the death of a few priests, ... it means there is a shortage of priests. Or does it mean we are running out of priests? If it were just a matter of statistics and numbers, we would have to face up to the latter. I believe that **the Lord wants his Church to flourish**, and **for that to happen there have to be priests**. I believe that he will give us the grace we need for the Church to be dynamic. But we should have no illusions about the situation being altogether healthy now.

What’s going on here? A few weeks back a man told me that he thought the problem would be solved if the Church would just change her mind and allow priests to marry and ordain women and married men. There is a long answer to that which explains why the ordination of women is not and never will be a possibility (just as motherhood is not possible for even the best of men) and acknowledges that there have not been married priests in the Church in the West (with certain important but rare) exceptions since the time of Christ. I am convinced by that long answer, and I think it is important for Catholics to know. But for today I am just going to ask you to look at the more obvious one.

The shorter answer responds to the simple question: But **this discipline has been with us for all these centuries—so what has changed in the past generation?** If it is out of our control to change the teaching or the law of the Church, our response should be more imaginative than simply to wish that we could. If the Church could come up with plenty of priests in other times, why can’t she today in our country? **If it has been a do-able thing for enough young men to step forward and ask to become priests in other times and in other places, why is it that now we think we have to redesign the requirements for our era?** Why are there a lot of young men studying for the priesthood in a number of African countries that were recently mission territory? Why are Ugandan and Filipino and Indian priests needed to staff American parishes?

**There is no vocation shortage.** God is calling just the right number of men to be priests. Everywhere. He always has and always will. The shortage is of a different sort. It is **a shortage of men responding: “Here I am. Take me.”** Are our young men less generous now? Perhaps the real answer is that we have been developing a culture of complete and instant gratification. **Something that takes a long time, takes sacrifice, just does not seem to be worth the bother.** And perhaps we—priests and laity—have made it **difficult to see what is so great about being a priest.**

**If the community treasures the priesthood there will be priests.** It’s that simple. The way we expressed our appreciation for the priest in the past was sometimes misguided. The priest was **put on a pedestal**. There was a little bit of that left when I was a boy. We could say “hi” to any other adult, but we had to say “good morning” or “good evening” to the sisters and the priests. Was it that long ago? I suppose it was.

We also presumed **that every priest could be trusted in every circumstance**; if he did act badly, he was to be protected and the word was not to be let out. There was good instinct behind all this: protecting the world from scandal, keeping the notion of the priest on a high plane, focusing on the holy thing that the priest was set apart to do. And to be. But it just wasn’t good for the priest, or for anyone else, to put priests on such a naïve pedestal. **We should expect a lot from him, yes.** The scandals of a few years ago taught us that, if we hadn’t already learned it. And **there have been priests who behaved scandalously. There always have been and there always will be. That’s not an excuse.** Sin is a permanent part of the human experience. It’s a reality. A lot of anti-Catholics distorted those scandals, making it appear that they were an epidemic, and only among priests. That is not true. A disgracefully high number of priests have misbehaved; repentance is called for. But a disgracefully high number of parents, of teachers, of coaches, of fast food restaurant managers, of movie stars and movie moguls, of politicians ..., etc, have done evil things. **The priests were singled out because there was a sadly high incidence of offences in a lax generation**, and because it is **an effective way to undercut the moral authority of the teaching of the Catholic Church.**

But, **without ever again giving a free pass for the priest to break the moral law, the Church needs to recover her sense of the treasure that is the priesthood.** The Catholic Church needs the priesthood. Not just to get some sacramental task done and to staff parishes (although priests are crucial for those reasons!). Humanity needs the priest. He is a preacher (but other arrangements might be found for that function, with deacons and lay teachers—although there is seldom the level of preparation for those that there is for the priest-preacher). The priest is the leader of the faith community. And it isn’t just a matter of his leadership skills. **The priest is the man who stands in the person of Christ**, in the greatest action of humanity in our return to God, offering the sacrifice of Christ to the Heavenly Father on behalf of all people. In this, the priest is indispensable. **He doesn’t start out holy; he is called to holiness and to bringing his congregation to holiness.** This is Eucharistic holiness we are talking about. Every priest I know is a work in progress.

Please pray for vocations to the priesthood. Pray, that is, for a culture that cultivates a love for this holy gift to God’s people and for responsiveness to God’s call. Pray that all of the priests we have will persevere, will cultivate that growth in the love of the Lord.

*-Father Kessler*

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