

*The Parishes of*

**Saint Mary in Bremen &  
Saint Bernadette in Lancaster**



**Madonna and Child**

**The Tenth Week of the Year**

June 10, 2018

## St Bernadette Parish

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

## St Mary Parish

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

cover picture: **Madonna and Child**

The serene mother holds her thoughtful baby, Jesus. The reclining but awakening figure of Eve on the base of this statue suggests that Mary is the new Eve, the mother of this new creation. This reminds us of the words in today's first reading, from the Book of Genesis:

"I will make you enemies of each other: you and the woman, your offspring and her offspring.  
It will crush your head and you will strike its heel."

In the reading from Mark's Gospel, Jesus tells us definitively how the role of his mother relates to our role:

"Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking round at those sitting in a circle about him, he said,  
"Here are my mother and my brothers. Anyone who does the will of God, that person is my brother and sister and mother."

sculpted (ca 1450) in polychromed terracotta by Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378-1455); now in the Cleveland Museum of Art

### our parishes

<b>both parishes</b>	<b>Fr Thomas Kessler</b>	<i>pastor</i>	(614) 634 • 0499	<i>wnthomaskessler</i>	@ icloud . com
	<b>Stephen Karnes</b>	<i>business manager</i>	(740) 654 • 1893	<i>stbernbook</i>	@ gmail . com
	<b>Kathy Kehnast</b>	<i>pastoral coordinator</i>	(740) 654 • 1893	<i>stbermparish</i>	@ yahoo . com
	<b>Julie &amp; Chase Stalford</b>	<i>youth ministry</i>	(740) 808 • 7294	<i>maristellaspiri</i>	@ gmail . com
<b>Bremen St Mary Parish</b>	<b>Ben Factor</b>	<i>liturgical music</i>		<i>b_factor</i>	@ lancaster . k12.oh.us
	<b>Sarah Borah</b>	<i>religious education</i>		<i>sborah920</i>	@ gmail . com
<b>St Bernadette Parish</b>	<b>Jeff Carpenter</b>	<i>deacon</i>	(740) 681 • 9918	<i>carpenter.277</i>	@ osu . edu
	<b>Mark Scarpitti</b>	<i>deacon</i>	(740) 438 • 3970	<i>dcn.mark</i>	@ frontier . com
	<b>Ann Essman</b>	<i>pastoral minister</i>	(740) 653 • 9347	<i>aessman001</i>	@ att . net
	<b>Steve Huber</b>	<i>facilities coordinator</i>	(740) 654 • 3137	<i>shuber57</i>	@ yahoo . com
<b>Saint Bernadette School</b>	<b>Angie &amp; Kent Kerns</b>	<i>religious education</i>	(740) 654 • 2588	<i>kwkerns</i>	@ gmail . com
	<b>Liz Latorre</b>	<i>liturgical music</i>	(740) 243 • 1872	<i>lizlatorre</i>	@ gmail . com
	<b>Pam Eltringham</b>	<i>principal</i>	(740) 654 • 3137	<i>peltring</i>	@ cdeducation . org
	<b>Barb Huber</b>	<i>secretary</i>	(740) 654 • 3137	<i>bhuber</i>	@ cdeducation . org

**The Bremen Parish office** at the church vestibule. Hours: 9-11 AM, Tuesdays. (740) 569 • 7738  
602 Marietta St, Bremen, OH 43107

**The St Bernadette Parish office** in the Mary Good Center, behind the church. (740) 654 • 1893  
1343 Wheeling Rd NE, Lancaster, OH 43130-8701 Hours: 9 AM-1 PM, MWThF; 11 AM-1 PM, Tu.

**Saint Bernadette School**  
1325 Wheeling Rd NE, Lancaster, OH 43130-8701 (740) 654 • 3137

### sacramental life

**Where** 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. 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 and both godparents need to be practicing Catholics. If you don't **attend Sunday Mass regularly (a basic part of being a practicing Catholic!)**, there is something you can do: Start coming to Sunday Mass.

**Penance** The priest is available for Penance

- at St Bernadette: on Saturday at 3 PM and Thursday 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. 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

### How the Church Prays at Mass Today

O God, from whom all good things come, grant that we, who call on you in our need, may at your prompting discern what is right, and by your guidance do it.  
 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.

### The Best of Intentions ... at Mass

<b>June 11, Monday</b>	8:20 AM	St Bernadette	Barbara Egan
<b>June 12, Tuesday</b>	8:20 AM	Bremen St Mary	Paul Schmeltzer
<b>June 13, Wednesday</b>	8:20 AM	St Bernadette	Richard Usilton
<b>June 14, Thursday</b>	6 PM	St Bernadette	Michael Clark
<b>June 15, Friday</b>	8:20 AM	St Bernadette	Dave McGraw

### Hear the Word of the Lord

<b>June 10 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>	<b>Genesis 3:9-15</b> <b>2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1</b>	<b>Ps 130</b>	<b>Mark 3:20-35</b>
<b>June 11, Monday</b> <i>St Barnabas,</i>	Acts 11:21-13:3	Ps 98	Matt 5:1-12
<b>June 12, Tuesday</b>	1 Kings 17:7-16	Ps 4	Matt 5:13-16
<b>June 13, Wednesday</b> <i>St Anthony of Padua</i>	1 Kings 18:20-39	Ps 16	Matt 5:17-19
<b>June 14, Thursday</b>	1 Kings 18:41-46	Ps 65	Matt 5:20-26
<b>June 15, Friday</b>	1 Kings 19:9-16	1s 27	Matt 5:27-32
<b>June 16, Saturday</b>	1 Kings 19:19-21	Ps 16	Matt 5:33-37
<b>June 17 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>	<b>Ezekiel 17:22-24</b> <b>2 Corinthians 5:6-10</b>	<b>Ps 92</b>	<b>Mark 4:26-34</b>

### Pope Francis Asks Us to Pray in June

... that social networks may work towards that inclusiveness which respects others for their differences.

### 'Tis the Season

Make today **the first day of the new season of Christian Initiation**. The RCIA (Rites of Christian Initiation of

Adults) marks by ritual several of the steps on the way to entry into the Church. I would like to declare today the day we begin praying, thinking about, and talking to next year's Easter entrants into the Catholic Church. It is time to begin the coming year's project of Evangelization! Two Sundays ago we celebrated God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit who empowered the Church to go out to all the world and tell the Good News. Now is the season for prayer, thought, and talking with/to/about our friends and neighbors, getting them ready for the RCIA class that will begin in late Summer!

Too shy for that kind of thing? Get over it! You are a Christian, aren't you? This is what Christians do. They tell the Good News. They do it respectfully, gently, and as intelligently as they can. But they do it! If you care about a person, you care about her or his eternal salvation. God can save people outside of membership in our Church. But the Church, since she provides her members with the sacraments, is the way the Lord Jesus has given to us as the ordinary means for us to receive that salvation. To neglect to share that gift is to neglect something your friend or neighbor or spouse may need. Start today.

## Both Parishes

### Retirement Reception

Mark your calendars for a retirement reception for Father Kessler. It will be hosted by both parishes on Sunday, June 24, from 12:30 until 2 PM in the St Bernadette parish hall. All are invited. Reception details below.

By the way, after July 10, Father Kessler will live and help out at St Catharine Parish in Columbus. His address will be  
*500 South Gould Road, Columbus, OH 43209*  
 His email will continue to be:  
*wmthomaskessler @ icloud.com.*  
 His cell phone will also continue to be:  
*(614) 634-0499.*

As we go to press, the next pastor has not yet been named, but Bishop Campbell assured Fr Kessler that he will be named soon.

### Cookies, Cookies, Cookies!

Members of both parishes are invited to contribute cookies for Father Kessler's Retirement Reception. Cookies may be dropped off at either of the church offices on Friday, June 22, or at the St Bernadette parish hall before the 11 AM Mass on Sunday, June 24. Call the St Mary parish office at (740) 569-7738 or the St Bernadette parish office at (740) 654-1893 for information.



## Your Support in May

St Bernadette	May 6	May 13	May 20	May 27	Totals
weekly	6,039	10,445	5,551	3,447	25,482
electronic funds transfer	2,818	176	176	176	3,346
educational support	350	116	65	25	556
gifts	200	255	2,500	100	3,055
<b>Total given to the parish</b>	<b>9,407</b>	<b>10,992</b>	<b>8,292</b>	<b>3,748</b>	<b>32,439</b>
Catholic Communications Campaign	45	0	267	8	320
<b>Total sent beyond the parish</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>320</b>

  

Bremen St Mary	May 6	May 13	May 20	May 27	Totals
Weekly	4,606	1,029	1,613	929	8,177
<b>Total given to the parish</b>	<b>4,606</b>	<b>1,029</b>	<b>1,613</b>	<b>929</b>	<b>8,177</b>
Catholic Communications Campaign	50	605	10	20	685
St Vincent de Paul	580	40	220	125	965
<b>Total sent beyond the parish</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>1,650</b>

## Bremen St Mary Parish

### Ministry at Mass at St Mary

+	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Communion	sacristan / usher
<b>10<sup>th</sup> Sunday June 10 at 8:30</b>	Jeanne Schmelzer	Charles Schoenlaub, Isaac Schmelzer	Wyatt Borah, Leo Kunkler Sr, Jim Schmelzer	Jim Schmelzer
<b>11<sup>th</sup> Sunday June 17 at 8:30</b>	Barb Van Fossen-Cook	Brooke Holt, Carly Kunkler	Irene Kunkler, Dismas Schmelzer, Barb Van Fossen-Cook	Barb Van Fossen-Cook

## Let's Keep (Square) Dancing

Summer means square dancing at Schmelzer's Grove. The first session is **this evening**, June 10, from 7-9:30 PM. Mark your calendars for the Sunday evenings of July 15 and Aug 12. Admission is \$4 per person.

## 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.



## Your Gift to the Food Pantry

The Bremen Food Pantry needs margarine or butter (among other things!). Place your donation in the refrigerator in the kitchen at St Mary parish hall. This will help the **Pantry Open House** in Bremen, on Saturday, June 30, from 9-11 AM, when any family in need can stop by to receive food assistance, with no prior registration or sign up needed.

## St Bernadette Parish

### Soup for the Soul Ministry

A new ministry is getting started at St Bernadette. This ministry will provide pastoral caring for folks recently discharged from a hospital or nursing home or who are homebound. Members will bring a gift of homemade soup from the parish. If you are interested in helping with this ministry, call Marlene Clark at (740) 974-6561.

### Ministry at Mass at St Bernadette

+	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion
<b>Saturday, June 9 at 4 PM</b> <b>10<sup>th</sup> Sunday Vigil Mass</b>	Terry Carpenter	Clara & Susan Craaybeek, Becca Fuller	Tara Craaybeek Bob & Angie Christy Susan Garrett Jim & Becky Kuhn
<b>Sunday June 10 at 11 AM</b> <b>10<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>	Dennis Forquer	Collin & Emma McCrady, Caroline Messerly	Pat Dreyer Pat Gins John & Teresa Hartig Rita Merk Ben Peters
Monday, 8:20 AM	Mary Jane Vajen	Brooke & Bryson Vogel	Pat Dreyer Kathy Kehnast
Wednesday, 8:20 AM	Bob Christy	Amelia & Gunner Robertson	Angie Christy Mary Jane Vajen
Thursday, 6 PM	Kathy Kehnast	Daschel & Dominic Neighbor	Lee Guinan Paul Lonergan
Friday, 8:20 PM	Jim Merk	Kendall Cox, Emma McCrady	Rita Merk Mary Jane Vajen
<b>Saturday, June 16 at 4 PM</b> <b>11<sup>th</sup> Sunday Vigil Mass</b>	Sandy Landefeld	Addy Myers, Dominic & Emeline Neighbor	Rosalie DeFillippo Marguerite Grimm Lee Guinan Kathy Kehnast Brad Rider Mickey Steyaert
<b>Sunday, June 17 at 11 AM</b> <b>11<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>	Jim Merk	Tori Loy, Brennan Quaintance, Gunner Robertson	Larry Sanford Teresa Scarpitti Anna Sevigny David Shonk Becky Wickham Amy Woo

## Around Central Ohio

### A Sign of Contradiction

People of science, medical professionals, families, priests, and religious are invited to an afternoon conference at St Peter Church in Chillicothe to revisit Pope Paul VI's famous encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. Learn about its

historical development, its prophetic message and what it means 50 years later. Speakers for the day are Dr Renee Mirkes, Dr Ashley Fernandes, Dr Alicia Thompson, and Fr Adam Streitenberger. The conference happens from noon to 5 PM on Saturday, July 7, at a cost of \$20 per person and \$35 per family. Pre-registration can be completed by June 25 by calling (740) 774-1407 or emailing secretary @ stpeterchillicothe . com.

## A Month for the Sacred Heart

The month of June is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Bishop Rosecrans first consecrated our diocese to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1871, and Bishop Campbell re-consecrated us in 2015. The diocese of Columbus has an apostolic organization dedicated to bringing Our Lord's Sacred Heart into every home, school and business. Visit [sacredheartcongresscolumbus . org](http://sacredheartcongresscolumbus.org).

## Holy Family Alumni

The Holy Family Alumni Association will hold its annual homecoming on June 24. An 11 AM alumni Mass will be held at Holy Family Church, followed by refreshments in the church undercroft. For details, contact Genny (Welker) Temple at (614) 539-4815.

## Marriage is a Sacrament!

But what exactly does *that* mean? You'll learn a new way to find the Lord in your home at a Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend. The next two weekends in Central Ohio are July 13-15 and Sept 14-16. For information or to apply, contact Paul or Marilou Clouse at (614) 834-6880 or visit [www . wmcolumbus . org](http://www.wmcecolumbus.org)

## An Interesting Job

The Catholic Foundation is looking for an **administrative coordinator** to provide support to the operations function of the Foundation with a focus on gift entry, development servicing, and donor servicing within the values of the Catholic Church and in support of the mission of the Catholic Foundation. To learn more, visit [www . catholic-foundation . org/employment](http://www.catholic-foundation.org/employment). Qualified candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to [kshuey @ catholic-foundation . org](mailto:kshuey@catholic-foundation.org).

## A Fisher Catholic Golf Event

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Chuck Rogers Memorial Golf Event happens Saturday, Aug 4, at 8:45 AM at the Pleasant Valley Golf Club in Lancaster. Three-person teams should send the \$150 fee to Kellie Shonk at Fisher Catholic High School. All proceeds will **benefit the Fisher Catholic Athletic Association**. Interested sponsors should contact Russell Rogers at (740) 304-7180.

## Basketball Camp

Fisher Catholic boys basketball camp for grades 1-8 runs from June 25-28 from 6-8 PM. Cost is \$40 for one child and \$30 for each additional child in a family.

## Springs Celebrates 150 Years

This year marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of **the founding of St Mary of the Springs Academy**. A committee of Academy graduates is searching for memorabilia, including photos, yearbooks, and diplomas, for a permanent display at The Jubilee Museum in Columbus. St Mary Academy was a school for girls founded by the Dominican Sisters in 1830 in Somerset in response to the educational needs of frontier Catholics. When a fire destroyed the buildings, the Sisters rebuilt in Columbus in 1868. To reflect the natural springs on the property, "of the Springs" was added to the name. The Academy closed in 1966. For information or donations, contact (614) 237-1379.

## There Was a Catholic Reformation!

St Mary Parish in Lancaster offers a course this summer titled "**True Reformers—Saints of the Catholic Reformation**." In this 6-part DVD series from the Augustine Institute, Dr Christopher Blum explores the lives of six saints who spearheaded the Church's renewal after the turbulence and confusion caused by the Protestant Reformation. You will discover that their call to return to the adventure of following Christ is just as compelling today as it was 500 years ago. Deepen your understanding of the Church's response to the Protestant Reformation through her saints. The series happens on Monday evenings from 7 to 8:30 PM from June 18 through July 30, and on Wednesday mornings from 8 to 9:30 AM from June 27 through Aug 15, in the Spirit Center. Workbook cost is \$17. Contact Brian McCauley at (740) 653-5054.

## Jubilee of Marriages

Bishop Campbell is inviting couples **married at least 25 years and celebrating an anniversary divisible by 5 ... and, in fact, any couple married more than 60-years** is invited to the Jubilee of Anniversaries to be held at 2:30 PM on Sunday, June 24, at St Andrew Church in Upper Arlington. The occasion will begin with Mass 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.

## Praying for Religious Freedom

As part of the national Religious Freedom Week, a Mass and holy hour for Religious Freedom will be celebrated Wednesday, June 27, at 5:15 PM, at Saint Joseph Cathedral. Holy hour will include the rosary, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and Benediction. All are welcome. Contact Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540 or [orsocmailbox @ columbuscatholic . org](mailto:orsocmailbox@columbuscatholic.org). For information about **religious freedom issues**, visit [www . usccb . org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty).

## Celebrating Diocesan Senior Citizens

Bishop Campbell will honor senior citizens on Tuesday, June 19, at 10:30 AM at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Grove City. He will celebrate Mass. A luncheon will follow. To register, send a check for \$15 by June 14 to the Office for Social Concerns, Diocese of Columbus, 197 E Gay Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. For information, call (614) 241-2540 or email socmailbox @ columbuscatholic . org.

## Pilgrimage to Alabama

St Gabriel Radio's pilgrimage to EWTN and the Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament in Alabama is filling up. Bus transportation, lodging, tours, and meals are all included. The bus leaves from 4747 Sawmill Road on Wednesday, June 27, at 7 AM and returns on Saturday, June 30, at 6 PM. For information or to register, go to the radio website or contact colleenl @ stgabrielradio . com or (614) 459-4820.

## On the Bottle

Remember the PDHC's Baby Bottle Campaign by collecting your loose change from Mother's Day to Father's Day, June 17, 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, which is next Sunday. Let us give thanks to our father and mother for choosing life and help a local family do the same.

event of this kind now to receive a family discount or early registration rate for in the area. Register at m3ssports . com by clicking "coming events" then "Josephinum 4-Miler". Walk or run at your own pace and enjoy a September morn in the park. Proceeds benefit seminarians of the Pontifical College Josephinum in Worthington. Sponsorships are available; call Joe Kohler at (614) 436-2441.

## Giving Birth and Giving Life

Angels Nurture and Disciple, AND is a new pro-life ministry that aims to inspire, empower, and facilitate significant improvement in the educational, career, financial, and spiritual well-being of single mothers who have chosen life for their unborn child. AND's programs extend to women who desire and seek change but don't have the support available to them to make transcendent change a reality. Each woman who seeks to enroll in AND is matched with a mentor who walks with her for two years, providing positive role modeling as a woman, mother, and child of God. AND is in significant need of volunteers and supporters. To support or volunteer, visit www . angelsand . org or call Tim Welsh at (614) 419-6985. 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. The poverty rate of single mothers is twice that of single fathers. AND is transforming single motherhood. Will you join us?

## Drug Addiction & Behavioral Health

Our Diocese continues to address the drug addiction crisis with a two-day Trauma Informed Care (TIC) training at Bishop Watterson High School's Dominican Hall on Monday and Tuesday, June 11-12. This approach acknowledges the role of trauma in addressing behavioral health problems. The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services will assist in the training. Cost is \$25 @ person. To register as a team or individual from a parish and or school, visit https:// columbuscatholic . org/tic-training.

## Making Contact

St Bernadette Parish [stbernadetteparish . net](http://stbernadetteparish.net)  
 St Bernadette school [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)

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

## Josephinum 4-Mile Run

The Friends of the Josephinum invite adults and children of all ages for a 4-mile run/walk at Glacier Ridge Metro Park, Dublin, from 9 to 11 AM on Sept 15. This professionally-run event is open to the public, with free parking available. Participants will receive great takeaways, including wine or jam and bread. Register the first Catholic-sponsored

## Sharing His Love, Encouraging Hope Bishop's Annual Appeal: 5th Report

BAA 2018 week 5	families participating	pledged	average gift	paid	goal
St Bernadette	122 / 440	\$34,765	\$ 285	\$18,500	\$36,305
% of goal	28%	96%		51%	
St Mary	42 / 135	\$15,905	\$379	\$9,135	\$13,121
% of goal	31%	121%		70%	
Diocese		\$4,392,461			\$6,750,000
% of goal		65%			

# Fathers' Day, from God's Point of View

God the Father is the Creator of all things and he is their sustainer. He made us. We belong to him.

That's why **all creation is good**, as the Hebrew Scriptures in the Old Testament have taught us. It is **his command that has called us to the splendor and the duty of stewardship of creation**.

When he told Adam to **name the creatures** it was a way to communicate to man his — our — **humble mastery of the rest of creation**. This is the source of our **duty to take care of our planet**, not so much as owners who can do what we want with it but **as good stewards** of what belongs to God and what we have to pass on through generations of other humans.

That is what fathers have to do with their children. And it puts us in mind of what fatherhood is. Saint Paul wrote to the Christians of Ephesus that

**“I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.”**

Notice that he did not say that the heavenly Father is made in the image of human fathers.

**God the Father is not a man**, he is God. He is not modeled after some sort of perfect human father. Rather, **every father**, no matter how perfect or imperfect, **has his original pattern in the heavenly Father**. That's why a human father learns from God what it means to bring forth life and to sustain it. That's what God has done for us. And it is what he has taught human fathers to do with their daughters and sons.

This is part of the reason we human beings must not reduce the notion of making new life to the lowly status of reproduction. **Reproduction** is what livestock do, what pets do, what Xerox machines do. Reproduction means making more of the same. Procreation means joining with God in his creating work of bringing into the world a unique human being, made in the image and likeness of God. Human men and women, when they are involved in this holy **procreation**, are making a unique new life with its genetic similarity to the marital partners. They know what they are doing. Or they should know. **They know** that it is God who is doing the creating. They know that means that love, committed love, should be involved. Committed marital love. They know at least a little bit about the joys and sorrows that are involved. They know that they are **pro-creating, participating in God's act of creation**. And not merely reproducing more of the same.

They are allowing God to work through them in creating a brand new and utterly distinctive person. They are — or they ought to be — **filled with awe**.

It isn't just the task of follow through in caring for the creation that human fathers should learn from the Father. There is also the awe in the creation. God saw all that he had made and he saw that it was good. No other creature **shares with God the Father this awe in the beauty** of what he has done.

God is our Father. If you didn't already notice, that phrase makes a use of the **masculine language of fatherhood**. It is normative, whether it is the way you or I might have chosen to put it or not. It is **the way God chose to introduce himself**. If he had it to do over again ... Wait! That is getting things backward. He knew what he was doing. Instead of trying to teach God his business, I need to learn from him my business.

God did know that **feminism** would come along, that it would have **something to say about some fathers who would do a poor job of fathering**. He knew that in such circumstances it might be **difficult for people to accept the notion that God is our father**. He knew about sin (he didn't invent it but he does tolerate it, for a time, in his amazing respect for us humans). He knew all along how **sin clouds our human awareness of the truth**. That's why **he has intervened to teach us the truth**. Including the truth about his own Fatherhood of us and of all creation. And to teach the truth about the fatherly care we have to exercise in our relation to our children and to all of **the creation which he has entrusted to us**.

Entrusted? Yes that's the right word. He has shown us trust and put these wonderful creations of his in our care. For a while. It is a temporary assignment. It only takes a lifetime. It is **a way to learn what God is like**. It is **a way to be like God**. That doesn't mean to “lord it over.” God isn't like that. He is **the humble Lord who washes feet**.

I do not have a wife and I have never procreated any children. And yet, as a priest, I am called “Father.” That is a humbling thing, particularly embarrassing to me when I was in my mid-twenties and elderly people, even some of my own old relatives, called me “father.” It was and is a reminder that **God alone is truly the father**. That dads and priests can only understand what their dignity is and what their task is by **contemplating the wonderful way God has with us humans**.

Next Sunday is **Fathers' Day**. **Do it right this year: Talk up the dignity** and importance of what fathering is in God's plan for human beings, especially with your own sons and daughters. **Renew your commitment** to respect it and approach it in God's way. And **pray for a culture of fatherhood** that is in such dangerous decline in our culture. Oh, yeah. And do something nice for your Dad.

—Father Kessler

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