

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners,

This past Thursday, twenty-eight students graduated from our school. During their years in our school we have worked with them to see that they have a good grasp of their Catholic faith. We hope that they will remember what we taught them for the rest of their lives. If they can't remember all of the details it is my prayer that they will at least remember that the Lord has a wonderful plan for each of our lives. It is in embracing His plan, His call for us, "our vocation," that we find our happiness.

Below is a reflection on the meaning of Christian vocation by Father Leo Troese in his book, **Seventeen Steps to Heaven**. Whenever I read it I find it inspiring. I hope that you will too. You may also know someone who really needs this message.

With my prayers,

Fr. Conley

Live always to fulfill God's plan for you.

This conviction as to the purposefulness of our lives is what we call the Christian sense of vocation. It is the awareness that we are called to fill a special spot in this world and to be a unique object of God's love, both here and hereafter. It is the vivid, day-to-day realization that we matter to God; that we are not just one of several billion souls tossed off by God in an absent-minded moment of creativity; that we have an individual importance to God and that God has a personal, intense, almost anxious interest in us.

Our Christian vocation imposes on us the obligation to respond to God's love for us, God's hopes for us. We do so when we try, day by day, to do God's will to the best of our ability. This means that we make God's will our compass, the norm and the guide of our lives. **In all our decisions and in all our choices, "what God would want me to do," must take precedence over "what I would like to do."**

This unswerving attachment to God's will also is what justifies God's choice of us for His work. We rarely know what the particular job is for which God has chosen us—a job that no one else could do quite as well as we. It may be a certain person whom God can reach with His grace only through us. It may be some chain of events that only we can initiate or some evil that only we can avert.

In most instances, we shall not know, until eternity, what particular task it was for which we — and we alone — were best fitted. This is another and urgent reason why we must strive, day after day, to do God's will in little things as well as in big things. We do not know which of our actions will be our exclusive and essential contribution to God's plan, or which of our words will be the fateful words upon which God is depending.

We know only that we must face each day and each moment as though *this* were the day and *this* the moment. Otherwise we run the risk of failing God in the one thing that so greatly determined His choice of us; and in failing God, we shall fail ourselves.

Our Christian vocation carries responsibility, but it has its compensations, too. One such compensation is the wholesome feeling of personal worth that should be mine.

If I am important to God, I am indeed an important person. Other people may not rate me very highly. My talents may be quite limited, and to those who know me, I may be just an average sort of person. My job may be a relatively

humble one, and I may be tempted to feel inferior as I see others around me making their mark in the world. Then I remember that money, position, and popularity — all the yardsticks by which the world measures success — are to God nothing more than a child's playthings. Eventually they must be cast aside and left behind.

In the meantime, if I am in a state of grace and am following God's will as my road through life, then every least action of mine has an everlasting value. However lowly the world may esteem me, every breath I draw is precious to God. Speaking again in human terms, God made me because He needs me. There is something that has to be done that only I can do. What greater personal worth could there be than to be needed by God? It matters little that I do not know the nature of my essential role in God's plan. It is enough to know that I am as valuable to God as the most distinguished person the world has ever acclaimed.

It would not be humility — it would be a belittling of God's wisdom and goodness — to pretend that I do not amount to much, that my life is meaningless, that I would never have been missed if I had not been born. It is just true that apart from God I am nothing. It is quite true that God's love has made me great. To admit this is to do simple justice to God. I must never surrender to the temptation to think, "I am no good. I am a failure."

From my sense of Christian vocation there follows another effect: freedom from serious worry. If I really believe that God loves me with an infinite love (as He does) and that He wants what is best for me (as He does), I cannot worry very long or very intensely. God is infinitely wise; He always knows what is best. God is infinitely powerful; He can accomplish anything He wishes. So how can I go wrong, how can I lose, as long as I try to do my best with such talents and knowledge as God has given me?

I cannot exaggerate God's love for me, God's care for me. He loves me a hundred times, a thousand times more than I love myself. I am never out of His mind or His attention. And it is not my happiness only in the next life that interests God — that most of all, of course. But, just as Jesus had compassion on the hungry multitude and worked a miracle to feed them, so, too, is God concerned with my happiness here and now.

Being human, I cannot escape suffering or dismiss worry completely. But, understanding God's urgent love for me, His concern for me, I will never be crushed by suffering or defeated by worry. God loves me. His love enfolds me — let us dare to say it — in a hungry embrace.

If I lose God, it will be because I have willfully rejected Him, never because He has cast me off. **God loves me. This is the whole reason for my existence. Upon my understanding and grasp of this fact my whole spiritual life must be built.**

from *Seventeen Steps to Heaven* by Fr. Leo Troese
(Sophia Institute Press, 2001)

PRAYER GROUP MEETING THIS THURSDAY

Our Prayer group meets this Thursday from 6:30 to 8:30 and dinner will be served. Everyone is invited to come and join us for Spirit-filled praise and worship of our Lord. Please contact Fr. Conley at frconley@comcast.net. to sign up.

MOTHER SETON -ON THE GIFT OF HOLY COMMUNION

"We are like helpless, destitute children who can do nothing, have nothing and must perish if left to ourselves. But by... the infinite love of our Jesus, He unites us with Himself and makes us a part of Himself both in soul and body, so that we may have recourse to Him, as to a tender parent. We can lay at the foot of His altar every affection, every desire of our heart (when) approaching Communion. He is all goodness. What may we not hope if we are only faithful to our grace!" Booklets of Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton's writings are available at our Religious Goods Store for free.

GOING TO THE WELL OF YOUR GENEROSITY!

We have to replace the well system for the parish this summer. The current system is over fifty-years old. To pay for this needed upgrade we need to raise \$50,000 toward the total cost. This effort has been endorsed by both the Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils. A letter has gone out to every household registered in the parish asking for your support of this effort. *We know we can count on your generosity!*

ST. MARY'S BRYANTOWN LADIES SODALITY TO HOST TEA PARTY ON SUNDAY, JUNE 24, from 2-5 pm in the Parish Hall. There will be door prizes, vendors and a silent auction. Tickets are \$25 for adults, and \$15 for children under 12. Call Grace Newman at 301-848-8927 or Elaine Jones at 301-274-0716 for more information.

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES:

Leila-Marie Baba, Anthony Michael Bonaccorsy, Tyler Christian Bueche, Geno Antonio Cantor, Robert Wesley Erickson, Madyson Antosha Ferrer, Cole Merritt Harkness, Aidan Patrick Higgs, Cameron K. Jones, Jr., Olivia Faith Jones, Mason Wesley McCauley, Julie Marie McLain, Ryan Michael McLain, Erin Ann McRoy, Kaylin Grace Misko, Kelsea McKenna Misko, Solstyn Mirako Moore, Alyssa Alden Murphy, Taylor Brenay Gertrude Nickens, Timothy Yury O'Brien, Samuel Connor Paris, Erika Nicole Alarcon Quenano, Scottie Renee Sage, Ian Matthew Scott, Jillian Frances Silverstone, Guillan Matthew Simon, Edward Uyles Waltemyer, Chyna Lavern Waugh, Laci Taylor Whiston.

FORMATION OF NEW HISPANIC KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL IN SOUTHERN MARYLAND

The Knights of Columbus are in the process of forming a new Council of the Knights of Columbus for Hispanic Catholic men, in Southern Maryland. The new Council will be headquartered out of Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church in Waldorf, MD and our Chaplain will be Father Santiago Martin. To join, or for any additional information on the Knights of Columbus, please contact Michael R. Gonzales, Knights of Columbus, at (301) 645-7518 (Home), (703) 599-5888 (Mobile) or at his e-mail at michael.r.gonzales@3-towers-consulting.com

RELIGIOUS GOODS STORE NEEDS HELP

We need some help to work after the 4 PM Mass. Please call Ellen Walls at 301-579-2557 or Fay Adriani at 301-645-3531.

LOVE FOR THE UNBORN AND OUR ETERNAL REWARD

In Luke, Chapter 14:12-14, Jesus tells us that the good we do for those who cannot repay us in this world is the most beneficial, because He assures us that we will "be repaid in the resurrection of the just."

Congressman Henry Hyde, one of the greatest pro-life advocates ever to serve in Congress, expressed this idea when he said: "When the time comes, as it surely will, when we face the awesome moment, the final judgment those in the pro-life movement will not be alone. I think there'll be a chorus of voices that have never been heard in this world, but are heard beautifully and clearly in the next world ...and they will plead for everyone who has been in this movement. They will say to God, "Spare him, because he loved us."

The unborn are even less able to repay us than the beggars and the crippled and the lame and the blind (to whom Jesus referred). At least, these poor people know that we love them and are able to say "Thank you."

The child in the mother's womb not only has no voice whatsoever, but cannot even tell you "Thank you," indeed, love and action for the unborn is the most selfless form of love. In this world, nothing comes from them in return.

MARRIAGE WORLDWIDE ENCOUNTER

Allow God to give you grace in abundance and transform your marriage relationship by attending a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. Sign up today to attend one of the upcoming Weekends on August 3-5, 2018 in Hanover, MD, or November 2-4, 2018 in Gaithersburg, MD.

Go to moments4marriage.org to sign-up or call 301-541-7007. It's not too early to sign-up! Early registration is highly recommended.

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Waldorf Chevy-Cadillac*

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK:

SUN: 8am Parishioners, 10am Glendon Heiston,
12N: Clarissa M. Williams, **MON:** 9:30am Larry Wood,
TUES: 8am Paul Istvan, **WED:** 8am Benjamin M. Edelen,
THURS: 8am Maurice Long, Sr., **FRI:** 9:30am Mary T. Edelen, **SAT:** 9am Clarence Davis, 4pm Helen Jane MacLuskie.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS:

Stephen Balenger, Mary Bowes, Bill Branick, Brenda Callahan, Frances Card, Joe Cross, Agnes Curtis, Chuck Davis, James S. Dorsey, Kendall Farrell, George Fassel, Arlene Gandolfi, Martha Gehring, Judy Istvan-Windsor, Irma Johnson, Regina Kijesky, Marie Knobel, Lillian Komar, Susie Logan, Jim Middleton, Mary Emma Middleton, Larry Miller, Joseph Mona, Wayne Mullings, Ryan Myers, Joseph Quade, Mary Reeves, Sylvene Savoy, William Leon Savoy, Edna Sweeney, Beth Weise, Tim Welch, Brice Zimmer.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION LAST WEEKEND:

\$7,927.02. The unidentified donations totaled \$491.77. We received \$20.00 for our School Support.