

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners,

The nomination to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court has reignited our national debate about abortion.

Fifty years ago this week there was a great debate in the Church of the United States about Pope Paul VI decision not to change church teaching in regard to the morality of using contraception. At the time of his decision, one of the arguments made by those who wanted the teaching to change was that doing so would end the practice of abortion. They maintain that the use of contraceptives would eliminate unwanted pregnancies and so no one would need abortions. Pope Paul argued that allowing the use of contraception would contribute to an increase of premarital sex and unwanted pregnancies. History has shown that his argument was the correct one. Promiscuity is rampant, single parenthood is common and abortion, which is the termination of a baby in the womb, is accepted as just another form of contraception.

Let us pray that our society will learn to respect the sanctity of life and our sexuality.

With my prayers,
Father Conley

“Generations of Love”

Humanae Vitae (1969-2018)

Celebrate God's gift of married love and life!

National Natural Family Planning Awareness Week

July 22-28, 2018

Shepherds have always been important in cultures, which depend on land and livestock sustenance. In the days of Jeremiah and the Lord Jesus, shepherds were usually heads of families assisted in the fields by their children. They searched out nourishing pastures and refreshing watering holes, and defended their flocks from wild animals and thieves on the prowl. It was a significant event, then, for God to reveal Himself to the people of Israel as a shepherd, since up to that point most cultures had thought of God in terms of wind, fire and storm. The God of Israel was different: He showed Himself to be in the midst of His people and desired a true, intimate relationship with them.

Eventually the image of shepherd was also used to describe the leaders God set over His beloved people – leaders who were to guide and guard and treat God's people just as He would, with compassion, tenderness and direction. Jeremiah lived at a time when the leaders God had appointed over his people let God down, misleading and scattering the flock. The Lord thus spoke through Jeremiah and proclaimed that He would personally take in hand this disastrous situation: He would gather the sheep from all the lands to which they had been scattered and appoint new shepherds who

would shepherd them as He desires, guard them from the dangers of the wild, and keep them safe and free of fear.

The Lord Jesus revealed Himself as the Good Shepherd, who would fulfill the will of His Heavenly Father completely by laying down His life for us. He healed and forgave; He challenged and turned conventional thinking upside down with the wisdom of His parables; He sought the lost and gathered the flock back together.

And he taught. Today St. Mark recounts the occasion when Jesus and the apostles had sought out a quiet place to rest but found that people were so irresistibly drawn to Jesus that they could not help but seek Him out. St. Mark pens a beautiful phrase that reveals another aspect of Jesus' mission: “When...he saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.”

Teaching has always been a crucial element in shepherding the Church, from the days of St. Peter down to the pontificate of Pope Francis. Teaching was an element of his ministry that Blessed Paul VI took very seriously because he recognized that the years of the Second Vatican Council and those immediately following were critical times of ferment and change not just for the Church but for the entire world. He knew the Lord was calling him to shepherd his people rightly.

Humanae Vitae remains to this day the prophetic words of a shepherd. In a world that can easily abide on the surface of things, Blessed Paul VI teaches us to look deeply into human life, our origin, our fulfillment, and our destiny. In a world that prizes expediency and consumerism, (what Pope Francis calls our “throw-away culture,” Blessed Paul VI challenges us to cherish the gift of human life. In a world whose religion is science and that gives blind adherence to the principle that “what is possible is therefore good,” Blessed Paul VI reminds us that the core of a truly fulfilled human life is the act of opening our minds and hearts to the wisdom of God, who created the world and all that is in it, and who knows and loves us more than we can fathom. In a culture where the human body and human life itself are exploited for entertainment and shameful profit, Blessed Paul VI begs us not to forget that the human body has beautiful, God-given worth and wisdom all its own, wisdom that is to be plumbed for its richness and lived with humility and joy. And, in a world that increasingly eschews any form of Christian shepherding, Blessed Paul VI stands as the prophet who proclaims God's blessed way to the world, the way that leads to peace, hope, holiness, and justice for all.

Humanae Vitae speaks to the deepest hungers of the human heart. The crowds who flocked determinedly and irresistibly around the lake to listen to Jesus were treated to lessons of life, of love, and of fulfillment in this world and the next. The Church gratefully celebrates this 50th

anniversary of *Humanae Vitae* and invites us to see through the powerful prejudices of our culture to the ageless wisdom of Jesus, His Father's gift of married love, and the fullness of life He offers to all. This timeless encyclical speaks to us ever more poignantly as time goes by, for it is God Himself shepherding us, His beloved flock.

THE WILD GOOSE: Discovering a Deeper Relationship with the Holy Spirit Twice a month on Thursday evenings from 6:30-8:45 in the hall. Dinner included. Cost is \$10. Join fellow parishioners for learning, discussion, prayer & praise about the Holy Spirit! Sessions continue on 7/26, 8/9, 8/23. It doesn't matter if you can't attend every session. Each night will have its own graces. You can sign up in the foyer or by contacting Fr. Conley at 301-870-2220, ext. 13 or frconley@comcast.net

WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

Jesus said, "Come away and rest awhile." Give your marriage new life by participating in a Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend 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. For more information visit our website at: moments4marriage.org.

LOYOLA ON THE POTOMAC

A Jesuit Retreat House

60th Anniversary Luncheon Cruise

Aboard the *Spirit of Washington*

600 Water St., SW, Washington, DC 20024

Sunday, August 12, 2018

Boarding time: 10:45 am

Cruise time: 11:30 - 1:30 pm

Bountiful Luncheon Buffet, Cash bar

DJ Entertainment, Raffles

Tickets must be purchased from Loyola on the Potomac

\$75.00 Reservations/Tickets

Contact Alice Case at (301) 392-0819 or

alice.case@loyolaretreat.org

September will feature our **Annual Crab Feast (September 9)** and then on September 14, our good friend, Father Frank Kaminski, S.J. will return to Loyola on the Potomac to lead us in a **Day of Prayer – "We Glory in the Cross of Christ."**

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.

CROSS CATHOLIC OUTREACH

Our parish will be hosting an Outreach Priest on the weekend of July 28 & 29, offering us the opportunity to share in celebrating the success of the Church in helping the poorest of the poor around the world. Please give generously!

HAVE YOU BEEN ASKED TO BE A GODPARENT OR SPONSOR? If so, **congratulations!** It is a great honor because you have been asked to help someone else to grow in faith as a Catholic. To assist those of you who are asked to be godparents or sponsors we have a two-class course called "**Preparing for the Sacraments for Parents and Sponsors.**" The free course is required for our parishioners who need a recommendation in order to be godparents or sponsors at other parishes. It will provide a good overview of our Catholic faith. This course is usually offered from 7 to 9pm on the first and third Wednesday of each month beginning in January. For more information contact Fr. Conley.

KNOW OF PARISHIONERS WHO ARE HOMEBOUND? Please contact Fr. Conley or Sister Theresa at the rectory so we can minister to their spiritual needs.

Please support our advertising sponsors. This week we recognize Gateway Florist

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK:

SUN: 8am Anthony Knobel, Sr., 10am Rev. Arnold DePorter, **12N:** Parishioners, **MON:** 8am Deacon Richard Schopfer, **TUES:** 8am Joyce Irwin, **WED:** 8am Mary Theresa Bowen, **THURS:** 8am James Gibson, **FRI:** 9:30am Betty Sasso, **SAT:** 9am **NO MASS**, 4pm John Brewer.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY

PRAYERS: Stephen Balenger, Mary Bowes, Bill Branick, Deacon Gene Burroughs, Brenda Callahan, Frances Card, Joe Cross, Agnes Curtis, Chuck Davis, James S. Dorsey, Kendall Farrell, George Fassel, Arlene Gandolfi, Martha Gehring, James Gibson, Zynae Green, 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, Eva Washington, Beth Weise, Tim Welch, Brice Zimmer.