

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners,

Undoubtedly, there are many troubling things going on in the world. With the horrific church scandals, never-ending wars and on-going political, social and racial divisions in our society, things can seem pretty bleak. It doesn't help that all of this bad news is delivered to us twenty-four seven by the media. Then there are the crosses we bear as families and individuals. In such an environment it is very easy to give into negativity and depression. This of course, is just what Satan, the ultimate killjoy, wants. He wants to kill our joy as the children of God and give in to hopelessness. Let's not fall for his lies! No matter how hard things may seem in the world or our personal lives, we need to remember that Jesus is still Lord and our God reigns!

I think the essay below, which appeared on the Catholic Exchange website, can help us keep our perspective.

With my prayers,
Fr. Conley

Don't Get Trapped By Negativity

By Br. Joseph Graziano, O.P.

*How sad, how lack-luster a life he leads
Who delights to describe the death he sees.
How rotten be the heart of a brother
Who snivels 'bout the rot in another!*

One thing we can know for certain about heaven is that this is not it.

Anyone with eyes and ears knows well the incredible number of catastrophes, scandals, fights, wars, murders, and more insidious evils that the world teems with today. The media reeks of bad news, taking "if it bleeds, it leads" to such a new height that the average local rag smells like a slaughterhouse. Of course, the major events are only symptoms of a deeper malady, one that eats away at our culture like leprosy or the plague.

In light of all these concerns, which I by no means intend to downplay, we can be tempted to fall into negativity and complaining, pointing out in person or on some social platform only the worst of things, ignoring the beauty of culture to speak only of apocalyptic cultural trends, or focusing on the sins movies make, rather than their wins. Even if we do not go so far as to publish our opinions, we can tend to highlight in our own minds those things that go wrong in our lives.

When we let ourselves stew in negativity, we soon become stuck in it. Rather than fighting to bring the Light to a twilight world—or at least admiring the sunset crimson glow still bathing the world—we stoop to merely commenting on how dark everything is getting. Yes, there are many problems in the world: we live in a

fallen world, full of wickedness and suffering. Yes, it is important to point out the malady so that people then see that they need the cure which Christ gave to His Church. Yes, we should seek perfection in all things.

But first, see the good of the thing that may be flawed, and do not despair that God permits those imperfections. Glory be to Him for dappled things, for in the variety and limitations of all created things, we see as in a mirror darkly the beauty of Him who is without change.

Once we are free of the chains of negativity, free to wonder in joy at the beauty of God present in the beauty of all creatures, and most especially in the beauty of each person, then we can truly shine like stars in the midst of a darkening world.

Then, too, we can look beyond the current reality to the incredible potential in each person, and in doing so, we become, like God, a Lover, for only the lover can look past all current faults to see future good.

And, after all, since in Baptism the Holy Trinity comes to abide in our hearts, if we understand correctly that heaven is first and foremost dwelling in perfect joy in the presence of the Holy Trinity, then heaven has in fact already begun on earth.

"Oh Lord, God of Hosts, happy the man who trusts in you."

RETREAT DAY ON DIVINE HEALING ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6 FROM 9:30A.M. TO 3:30 P.M. The day will focus on Healing Prayer with presentations on praying for physical and inner healing. The retreat day will conclude with the evening Mass and opportunities to receive Prayer for healing and the Sacrament of Anointing. You can register at www.eventbrite.com/e/healing-prayer-retreat-tickets-49560541915

"FOLLOWING JESUS: PRIEST, PROPHET AND KING" is the subject of our next faith formation class. The classes will begin on Thursday, September 13. The subsequent classes will be on September 27, October 11 and 25, November 8 and 29, and December 13. This DVD series will be presented by Bishop Robert Barron. He is a very popular speaker and has many presentations on YouTube.

We will continue our usual format on Thursday nights for this seven part series. The cost is just \$10 for the series to defray some of the food costs. You may sign up in the foyer or by contacting Fr Conley at frconley@comcast.net

MASS PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAM - The little ones of the parish are invited to join us for some Sunday fun and learning at the St. Mary's Angels, Mass Pre-school program for ages infant-five years (infant spots limited) at the 10:00 am Mass. Parents can attend Mass each Sunday, while your children interact with other children in a religious atmosphere. The program will start on September 23rd. Don't miss out on the fun and a free service. RSVP: Lisa Shumaker smbacct@comcast.net, or (301)870-2220 ext. 11.

COUNTRY FIXIN'S DINNER – Sacred Heart in La Plata is having their dinner on Sunday, September 30th from 12 Noon - 5 PM. Menu: Fried Chicken, Pulled Pork, Baked Crab Balls, Parsley Potatoes, Green Beans, Corn Pudding, Cole Slaw, Baked Apples/Pears, Rolls & Butter. \$25 per dinner. all you can eat. Carry-out/Drive- Thru Menu: 4 pc. Chicken, Pulled Pork, Potatoes, Green Beans, Cole Slaw, Roll, Meal or Bucket: \$16.00. Baked Crab Balls 6 for \$5.00. Children 6-12 is \$10, Children under 6 are free.

ALTAR SERVERS are needed for our weekend Masses. Parents with children who are interested should contact Karen Bray at 301-274-4469. Servers must be in the fourth grade or above to be servers.

RELIGIOUS GOODS STORE WILL BE HAVING SELECT ITEMS ON SALE FROM 50 -70% OFF ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, AFTER ALL THE MASSES.

RELIGIOUS GOODS STORE NEEDS HELP

We need some help to work after the 4 PM & 12:00 Masses. Please call Ellen Walls at 301- 579-2557 or Fay Adriani at 301-645-3531.

OUR CHOIRS NEED YOUR HELP!!! *We are now asking SMB members to consider joining our 10 AM or our Noon choirs. Our music ministry provides beauty, joy, comfort, inspiration, and prayer. This is possible only with the generous sharing of the time and talent of our committed choir members. If you can carry a tune and want to join a group of loving, caring Christians, please consider joining us! If interested, please call Kaye Oliver at 240-254-2463.*

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. The classes for October are October 3 and 17 from 7-9pm. The classes will meet on the first and third Wednesday of each month. For more information contact Fr. Conley.

"THE LORD IS IN THE BOAT: FAITH IN THE STORM OF THE CLERICAL ABUSE SCANDAL." Join the Charles County Catholic Community at the Greene Turtle in LaPlata on Thursday September 20 to hear Dr. Chad Pecknold, Professor of Theology at the Catholic University of America. Happy Hour begins at 6pm and the talk begins at 7pm. All are welcome!

FALL DINNERFEST

Mark your calendar as the Annual Parish Dinnerfest is fast approaching. This year's event will be on Sunday, Nov. 4th. If we are to continue this wonderful Parish event we **NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS** to help with the planning and running of the event. For more info please contact Ellen Bowles @ 301-472-4247 or heresellen@hotmail.com

RETRouvaille MARRIAGE PROGRAM

4 Stages of Marriage – The 4 stages of marriage are: (1) Romance, (2) Disillusionment, (3) Misery, and (4) Awakening. Many marriages experience the first 3 Stages. Marriages that end in divorce never make it to the 4th Stages of Awakening. Don't give up without learning about the 4th Stage of Awakening. If your marriage suffers from Disillusionment or Misery, please contact Retrouvaille. All calls are confidential.

To register or obtain more information visit our website at: www.HelpOurMarriage.com or call 443-400-7017.

SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE –

The Social Concerns Committee collects food 52 weeks per year. Please help address the needs of our community with food donations. Bins are located in the back of the church. We are grateful for your continuing support.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK:

SUN: 8am Steven R. Haffer, Jr., 10am Jessie Chlysta, 12N: Parishioners, **MON:** 8am Mary Theresa Bowen, **TUES:** 8am Benjamin M. Edelen, **WED:** 8am Ellen Montgomery Mattingly, **THURS:** 8am Mary T. Edelen, **FRI:** 9:30am Joseph Steiger, **SAT:** 9am Charles Downs, 4pm Rev. Winthrop Brainerd.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY

PRAYERS: Stephen Balenger, Mary Bowes, Deacon Gene Burroughs, Brenda Callahan, Frances Card, Joe Cross, Agnes Curtis, Chuck Davis, Susan Welch Day, Kendall Farrell, George Fassel, Keith Van Gadson, 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, Pat Werner, Gary Williams, Brice Zimmer.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION LAST WEEKEND:

\$8,398.00. The unidentified donations totaled \$623.00. We received \$225.00 for our School Support.