

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

Missionaries of the Precious Blood
St. George Deanery



Pastor REV. MATTHEW KELLER C.P.P.S.
Email frmatt@glandorfstjohns.com

Deacon DON INKROTT

PARISH OFFICE BUSINESS HOURS

Monday—Friday, 9:00am - 5:00pm
Closed for Lunch from 12:30pm—1:30pm
Phone: 419-538-6928
Sacramental Emergencies : 419-778-9339
Fax: 419-538-6147

Website: www.stjohnsglandorf.org
Email: admin@glandorfstjohns.com

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109 N. Main Street
PO Box 48
Glandorf, OH 45848

Business Manager: Ashley Duling
Email: bmanager@glandorfstjohns.com

Administrative Assistant: Michelle Horstman
Email: admin@glandorfstjohns.com

Music: Dan Ellerbrock

Maintenance: Joe Schroeder

Janitors: Mark Klausing (Church),
Mark Kaufman (Parish Center)

Cemetery Caretaker-Manager: Jeff Gerding

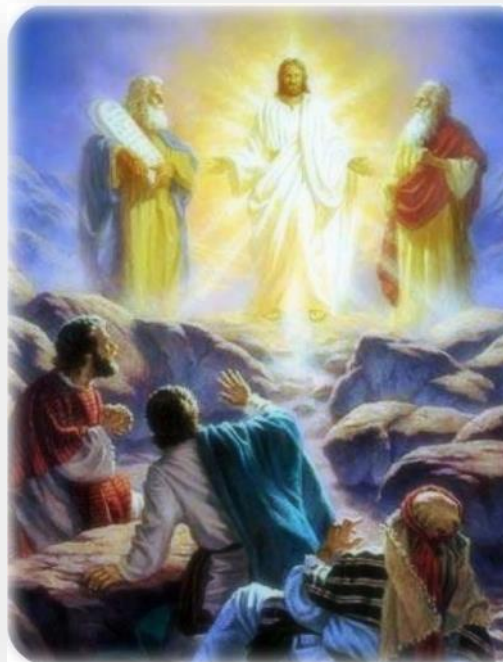
Preschool Administrator: Lori Rump
Email: preschool@glandorfstjohns.com
Phone: 419-538-6264

K-4th Religious Education: Tammy Schmitz
Email: k4ccd@glandorfstjohns.com
Phone: 419-538-6335

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Phone: 419-538-6897

High School Religious Education: Ruth Gerding
Email: hscdd@glandorfstjohns.com
Phone: 419-538-6897 Cell: 567-204-1275

Parish Council President: Mike Karhoff
Finance Committee Chairperson: Matt Bockrath
Altar Rosary Society President: Betsy Maag
Men's Society President: Tony Schroeder



TRANSFIGURATION

Jesus is transfigured to show God's glory. The three Apostles who accompany Jesus up the mountain see him in his resurrected glory. They hear God the Father claim Jesus as his beloved Son and tell them to listen to him. May we each find time in our lives to quiet ourselves and listen for the many ways Jesus speaks to us.

PARISHIONERS

- New Members
- Any status or address changes
- To keep informed, register for Bulletin and Parish Notifications by email or visit St. John's website

Call or email the Parish Office

WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN OUR PARISH?

- If you are interested in becoming a Lector, Extraordinary Minister, Usher, Funeral Server, Choir, Spirit and Song Group and any other way.
- If Interested in becoming a member on our Finance Committee or Parish Council Committee. Please call the parish office for more information and to be put on the next ballot.

Call or email the Parish Office.

CYO SPORTS

DIOCESAN POLICY FOR CYO SPORTS – All players must be members of the sponsoring parish and/or educational system of the parish in order to play on the parish team. **PARISH POLICY FOR HIGH SCHOOL CYO** Playing any sports this year? You are expected to attend both the Fall & Winter sessions of High School Religious Education Groups or Grade School CCD Classes--plus weekend Saturday or Sunday Mass. This includes all players, coaches and their families. Attendance at these groups/classes will be monitored and reviewed. For each class missed, beyond 4 classes you will be sitting out one game. Parents, if your child is sick, please call or text Ruth Gerding at 567-204-1275 before class. This also includes the **PUTNAM COUNTY GRADE SCHOOL BOY'S & GIRL'S CYO SPORTING TEAMS**. We kindly ask the cooperation of all concerned as we implement this church policy for the good of our parish. Fr. Matt & Mike Karhoff

2 FROM THE DESK OF FATHER MATT

www.stjohnglandorf.org

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration. Today we remember what happened up on the mountain when Jesus revealed his glory to the disciples, but what I think is so easy to forget about the event of the Transfiguration is the context that this story gets placed in the scriptures. Just prior to taking the disciples up on the mountain, Jesus asked the disciples “who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16:15). Peter’s answer to this question, with a marvelous profession of faith “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). Jesus then goes on to say that he is going to be killed by the religious leaders and be raised on the last day. Peter rebukes by saying “God forbid Lord” (Matthew 16:22) this is not going to happen and then Jesus rebukes Peter “Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me” (Matthew 16:23). It is after this that Jesus leads Peter, James, and John up the mountain.

Where Jesus face shone like the sun and his clothes become white, where Moses and Elijah appeared to them conversing with Jesus, and where the casting cloud and the voice that came from the cloud that said ““This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him”” (Matthew 17:5). An event that where nonetheless Jesus reveals his glory to his disciples. A revelation of glory that made Peter, James, and John feel fearful. A revelation of glory that may not even seem to be real in the moment. When they were coming to down from the mountain “Jesus charged them, ‘Do not tell the vision to anyone’” (Matthew 17:9). If someone claims to have had a vision it would seem to imply the possibility of not being real, it could be fake.

Sometimes I think like Peter, James, and John, we need to have those dramatic almost unreal, almost fake experiences of our God so that God can get our attention, so that we can hear his voice. In a certain sense I like to think this is what the experience of the Transfiguration is. The disciples had an experience of God that allowed them to hear the voice of God say to them “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him” (Matthew 17:5).

The disciples had this experience of God, but I think we also have these experiences in our own lives.

One example of this is a person that lives a very unhealthy lifestyle and one day they have a health episode that nearly costs him/her, his/her life. It is from this experience that he/she hears the message that he/she needs to change his/her life and does.

I also think of the example in my life when I was beginning to sense that God was calling me to the priesthood, I went on a Charismatic Life in the Spirit Retreat. During the retreat the leaders for the retreat were offering to pray over the participants on the retreat. I took my turn to allow myself to be prayed over. It was a powerful experience of prayer, it was a dramatic experience of God, in away it almost seemed to not be real. As I was prayed over, I heard the voice of God say to me “you are going to minister to thousands of people”. Now what that message meant at the time was not totally clear to me, but it was a message that needed to be paid attention to. But it was a voice that I probably would not have heard if I had not had this dramatic experience.

As we celebrate the Transfiguration today going up on the mountain with Jesus, may we have an experience of God that allows us to hear his voice speaking to us.



MONDAY, AUGUST 7

7:35am Rosary

8:00am Communion Service-Don Inkrott**TUESDAY, AUGUST 8 St. Dominic**

7:35am Rosary

8:00am Joe Uphaus**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9 St. Teresa Benedicta**

7:15-7:45am Confessions

7:35am Rosary

8:00am L/D Alfrieda Schroeder Family

6:30-7:30pm Adoration

7:00pm-7:30pm Confessions

THURSDAY, AUGUST 10 St. Lawrence

7:35am Rosary

8:00am L/D Norbert & Francie Ellerbrock, Bob Nartker**FRIDAY, AUGUST 11 St. Clare**

7:15am-7:45am Confession

7:35am Rosary

8:00am Samantha Nienberg(AN)

12:00pm Rosary

6:00pm Wedding Rehearsal-Mary Ellen Halker

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12 St. Jane Frances de Chantal

7:35am Rosary

8:00am Poor Souls

8:30am Confessions

1:30pm Wedding Hageman/Brinkman

4:00pm Confessions

4:30pm Juanita & Urban Selhorst,**L/D George & Mary Kuhbender Family, Joyce Smith,****L/D Jim Unterbrink Family****SUNDAY, AUGUST 13 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

7:35am Rosary

8:00am Denny Horstman, Thomas Kaufman**10:30am L/D James & Alfred Buddelmeyer Families,****L/D Klear & Hanneman Families,****L/D Lawrence & Martha Maag Family, Craig Vorst,****Rosella Karhoff(AN)**

11:30am Baptism - Deacon Don Inkrott

WEEKDAY SERVERSMon **8:00am** No MassTues **8:00am** Allison Kuhlman, Jonathan Klear, Addison KnuevenWed **8:00am** Liam Kaufman, Reese Karhoff, Landon HeckmanThur **8:00am** Mylie Bockrath, Nolan Grime, Ryland EllerbrockFri **8:00am** Will Faber, Addyson Faber, Alania DulingSat **8:00am** Quinn Crumrine, Lochlan Brinkman, Ella Brady**Next Sunday, August 13****SUNDAY SERVERS**Sat **4:30pm** Riley Trombley, Noah Schroeder, Landyn SchulteSun **8:00am** Evan Brady, Parker Heckman, Makenna SiefkerSun **10:30am** Dylan Giesswein, Hannah Brickner, Megan Brickner**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS****LECTORS**Sat **4:30pm** Mary Ellen Halker

Louis Halker

Reagan Miller

Morgan Miller

Sun **8:00am** Tom Schmitz/Deb Burwell

Gretchen Schmitz

Diane Nienberg

Doug Karhoff

Sun **10:30am** Tara Gerding

Rose Ellerbrock

Janet Schroeder

Jay Rump

SUNDAY GIFT BEARERSSat **4:30pm** Tom & Gretchen SchmitzSun **8:00am** Adam & Kristen KuhlmanSun **10:30am** Steve & Misty Schnipke**AUGUST USHERS**Sat **4:30pm** Don & Ginnie RiepenhoffSun **8:00am** Bart Recker, Ken KottenbrockSun **10:30am** Jerry Recker, Al Kaufman**COUNTERS FOR SUNDAY: 2****ROSARY NEXT SUNDAY:** Ginny Schroeder & Karen Parker**AUGUST FUNERAL ROSARY LEADERS:** Gary & Diane Meyer, Jane Uphaus, Ron Schmitz, Larry & Carolyn Dorn**SACRAMENTS****Baptism**

Instruction is necessary when this is your first child. To arrange a baptism or register for the parental baptism class, please contact the Parish Office.

PARENTAL BAPTISM CLASS (by Deacon Don) Parish Center

Room 15 9:00am -10:30am

Upcoming classes: September 10, 2023

Marriage

Please contact the Parish Office six months in advance to start planning your wedding. A marriage preparation class is required.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION CLASS 1-DAY CLASS

organized by Dr. Craig and Wendy Imm in the Parish Center Cafeteria

Sunday, November 5, 2023 at 8:00am

Initiation of Adults into the Catholic Faith (RCIA)

Is a journey through which interested adults and older children are welcomed and gradually introduced to the Roman Catholic Faith, Sacraments, Worship and way of life. In response to their inquiries, these people are properly instructed so that you can discern (through reflection and prayer) whether you are indeed called to Catholicism. If you would like more information or want to register please contact the Parish Office. The next session will start in the fall.

Reconciliation (Confession)

Wednesday 7:15am -7:45am, 7:00-7:30pm

Friday 7:15am-7:45am

Saturday 4:00pm-4:15pm

Anointing of the Sick

Please call the Parish Office if you need a Priest for Anointing of the Sick or Last Rites.

If a Sacramental Emergency call 419-778-9339.

Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesday 6:30pm-7:30pm 1st Saturday 5:30pm - 8:00am

1st Friday 1:00pm-4:00pm with Benediction

Holy Orders and Religious Life

Contact the vocation office at the Toledo Diocese at 419-244-6711 or e-mail psmith@toledodiocese.org or contact the vocation office at the Missionaries of the Precious Blood 937-228-9263 or e-mail vocation@cpps-preciousblood.org.

4 PRAYER AND STEWARDSHIP

STEWARDSHIP July 30, 2023	
Offering	
Loose	\$ 574.00
Adult Envelope	\$ 8,308.50
Children	\$ 106.00
Maintenance	\$ 465.00
Online Giving	\$ 2,290.00
Total Collection	\$11,743.50

Thank you to all of you who have been continuing to make your Weekly/monthly contributions to your St. John's parish family and for sharing your treasure, time, & talent with your St. John's parish family!

Give Online Today!

Visit our website to get the E-Giving Form to fill out and return to the Parish Office. It is located in the left side above the Menu options. www.stjohnsglandorf.org

Heartbeat needs size 3 Diapers & **NEW HOURS** for **Heartbeat** starting July 31st Open Tuesday's 1-5pm and Thursday 9-1pm

Ottawa Food Pantry needs the following items crackers (any type), Peanut Butter, Boxed Potatoes, Salad dressings, boxed dinners, Box Pancake mix, canned potatoes, mayonnaise, can pasta, cream corn, dry beans, noodles, fresh style green beans, snacks (chips, nuts, cookies), toilet paper



2023 DIOCESAN ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

This Is The Day! Through our contributions, we can assure the continued existence of many important programs that help tens of thousands in our diocese each year, including supporting the education of our seminarians, caring for the sick and needy, and providing faith formation for our youth. We ask you once again for your help. Please respond generously. For more information, visit acatoledo.org. Thank you!

Our goal this year is \$46,479.00.
We currently pledged \$39,852.54 87.22% of goal .



2023 GRAND-orf Club

drawing and coffee & donuts by Andrea and Doug Giesige will be **August 13th** in **Cafeteria**. Extra tickets are in the racks in the church vestibules.

The Holy Father asks for our prayers for a specific intention each month.

August: For World Youth Day

We pray the World Youth Day in Lisbon will help young people to live and witness the Gospel in their own lives.

A PRAYER FOR 'THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD JESUS'

At the Transfiguration, Father, You showed Jesus in glory, a glimpse of what

His disciples would see in His risen life.

Bless us in our humanity, with an awareness of Your presence, leading us to share in Your divine life even in our daily struggle.

Help us to deepen our knowledge of the Law and the Prophets, channels of Your grace throughout history, and signposts for our journey.

Amen

Pray For Those Who Have Gone Before Us

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Lawrence W Stoepfel 8/13/01 | Eileen M Bockrath 8/17/10 |
| Linus J Karhoff 8/14/12 | Charles B Siefker 8/18/05 |
| Gregory G Hovest 8/14/15 | Anna Marie Kahle 8/18/17 |
| Florence M Homier 8/17/05 | Evelyn M Wischmeyer 8/19/07 |
| Sharon A Kuhlman 8/17/09 | |

Please Include them in your prayers

OUR FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Please remember in your Masses and prayers the soul of our faithful departed . Our sincere sympathy is extended to their families, relatives, friends & neighbors.

GREGORY FREY
LUCILLE ELLERBROCK

WEDDING BANN

- III**-Erica Hageman of this parish, daughter of Thomas & Laurie Hageman and Griffin Brinkman of this parish, son of Greg & Hope Brinkman
- II**-Lindsey Schneeg of this parish, daughter of Michael & Mary Beth Schneeg and Jared Keyser of Perrysburg, son of Dennis & Lindy Keyser



CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR 50th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY!

LOUIE AND MARY ELLEN HALKER

THANK YOU

A warm heartfelt THANK YOU to Larry Dehnart for his many years of service. Keeping our Church grounds looking spectacular!!!

**BECAUSE OF THE IMPORTANT
ISSUE ON THE BALLOT ON AUGUST 8TH
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH WILL BE OPEN
FOR PRAYER FROM 8:30 AM TILL 7:30 PM
WHEN THE POLES CLOSE.**



**PLEASE COME AND PRAY
BEFORE OUR LORD IN ADORATION!**

Use the link or QR code to sign up for adoration slots. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050f4eaaab2ba7f85-election#/>



St. Catherine's Embrace Outreach Volunteer Training

St. Catherine's Embrace is an outreach ministry that acknowledges and supports the many families in the St George Deanery/ Putnam County area who have lost babies through miscarriage or stillbirth. Through trained volunteers from each parish, we provide resources and an engraved keepsake box filled with helpful books, artwork, and handmaid memorial items crafted by parishioners from across the county. Are you interested in becoming a volunteer in your parish? We have a brief training session scheduled for Tuesday, August 8th at 6:30 PM in Glandorf. Please call or text Mary Beth at (419)980-8065 or email scembrace@gmail.com for more details.



BIBLE STUDY



Women's Bible study for all ages starting this fall. Please RSVP by August 10.

Together we will address the question,

"So why is Jesus Christ interested in your friendship?"

No homework, flexible, monthly Sunday gatherings @ 7pm.

Call Stacey & Sophia Bennett for more information @ 567-376-0125.

FUNERAL LUNCHEON MINISTRY

Volunteers who make desserts or help with the luncheon.

Thank you for all your help with this ministry throughout the years. We need your assistance, if you no longer have a land line, please text Darlene Miller your cell phone number. So they can contact you for help with a funeral. Darlene cell phone number is 419-203-0409 and Alice Diemer 419-538-6616.

PARISH CENTER ACTIVITIES

**Every Second Sunday of the Month
August 13th**



COFFEE AND DONUTS AND GRAND-OLY CLUB

located in cafeteria after 8:00am and 10:30am Masses by Andrea and Doug Giesige



LENDING LIBRARY

located in Room 15 after 8:00am and 10:30am Masses

PARISH MUSEUM

Visitation Hours
from 9:00am—12:00pm
Located in Hallway. For visitors outside of the scheduled time, please contact Michael Leach 419-538-6948.

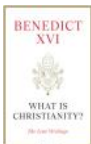
St. John's Historical Society

PREORDER -

"What is Christianity? The Last Writings"

The final work by Benedict XVI, which he asked to be published upon his death, is filled with writings about themes that are "prophetic insight into our times."

To pre-order, contact Mustard Seed at 419-538-7220



TRAINING

TRAINING FOR LECTORS

Wednesday, August 23, 2023 at 7:30pm in the Church

Any high school student (16 years or older) or Adult that is interested please call the office 419-538-6928. If no one signs up we will be cancelling the class.

FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

Wednesday, August 30, 2023 at 8:30pm—9:30pm in the Church

Any high school student (16 years or older) or Adult that is interested please call the rectory (419)538-6928. We would like it if all Eucharist Ministers that assist with setting up for the next day's Mass come and get a hands on training on how to setup for the next day's Mass.

ARE YOU SOMEONE OR DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO...

- Has expressed an interest in becoming Catholic?
- Was baptized Catholic but has not celebrated Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist or Confirmation?
- Would like to understand your Catholic faith better?

We offer you an opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith through the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) process. Sessions focus on the teachings of the Catholic Church, the Sacraments, the Mass and how to live out the Catholic faith on a daily basis, with preparation for individuals to celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist during the Easter Vigil. You are welcome to join us to learn about our Sacred Tradition and what the Deposit of Faith given to us by Jesus Christ teaches us. Our sessions begin in September and continue every Monday through May from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. If you are interested in taking this first step to inquire about the Catholic faith, please call the rectory at 419-538-6928 and register. There will be paperwork to fill out and return, prior to the first session in September. We hope you will join us in this process of learning more about Christ and His Church.

Parental Baptism Class

Sunday, September 10, 2023 at 9:00 – 10:30 AM

in room 15 in parish center presented by Don Inkrott.

Pre-register by calling St. John's 419-538-6928.

Next class will be in 2024. Watch bulletin for dates.



Elementary and Jr High School Corner



Kindergarten Orientation

Tuesday, August 22nd
6:30pm—7:15pm

Parents learn about our CCD program, meet your child's Catechist and kids get to visit their classroom!

STATE ISSUE 1
YES

VOTE YES ON ISSUE 1

PROTECT OHIO'S CONSTITUTION

JULY 30
Voter Registration
Deadline

JULY 11
Early Voting
Begins

BE MY VOICE!

Why you should vote YES on Issue 1

August 8, 2023 - Issue 1 - Vote Yes. A yes vote will raise the threshold to pass a constitutional amendment in Ohio from the present simple majority of 50% plus one to 60%. Making it 60% to pass an amendment will protect Ohio's Constitution from being co-opted by wealthy out-of-state interest groups that intend to sidestep Ohio's checks and balances by buying their way onto the ballot. A Yes vote will ensure that any future Constitutional amendments will be determined by a strong majority of Ohioans, not special out of state-interest groups looking to enrich themselves.

Ohio is one of only 18 states that even allow citizen-initiated constitutional amendments, and one of only 16 states that send them straight to the people for a vote. And of those 16 states, Ohio's 50% threshold for passing them is among the lowest. Ohio is one of the worst states in the nation when it comes to protecting its constitution. Our US Constitution requires two-thirds to pass an amendment. Groups opposing Issue 1 such as the Ohio Education Assoc., The ACLU, League of Women Voters and Planned Parenthood all require a two thirds vote to change their own constitution. These are all in sharp contrast to our existing Ohio 50% plus 1 rule.

In addition, currently without Issue 1, Signatures for a petition to change the State Constitution only need to come from 44 different counties. If Issue 1 passes, Signatures will need to come from all 88 counties. This would insure a more diverse and representative population of Ohioans to determine whether proposed amendments appear on the ballot by including rural areas in the decision. Furthermore, once mandatory signatures are collected they are checked to be sure the signers are all registered voters. Currently if not enough registered signatures are obtained, there is additional time to retrieve more. Passing Issue 1 would not allow that extra grace time for special interest.

Your YES Vote Matters August 8, 2023
Lives are depending on You!

November 7, 2023 Vote NO on the proposed Amendment that would amend Article 1 of the Ohio Constitution by adding Section 22, titled "The Right to Reproductive Freedom with Protections for Health and Safety" amendment. It's name is intended by the abortion cartel to confuse and mislead voters into supporting an extreme abortion agenda. If passed and added to Ohio's Constitution, it would make abortion on demand through all nine months of pregnancy (including painful and cruel late term procedures on perfectly healthy babies) and would be the repeal of current health and safety provisions that protect women and the unborn children, and will certainly eliminate parental notification and consent before children seek out life-altering procedures like an abortion or gender-altering puberty blocker or surgery. Parents rights would be stripped away!

Pro-Life Prayer

Heavenly Father, Thank you for creating each of us, including our unborn brothers & sisters, in Your image & likeness. We ask for your protection on all precious babies waiting to be born. We pray for an end to abortion in the United States. We lift up mothers & fathers facing unexpected pregnancies & challenging times. Help us to love & serve them in their time of need. Today, I pledge to never be silent or passive in my defense of life. I commit to protecting babies & serving moms until every life is welcomed with love & protected by law in our nation. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen!

Pray and Fast for the passage of Issue 1 on August 8 and also to defeat the amendment to our State Constitution up for Vote Nov. 7, 2023

AROUND THE AREA

Assumption Novena

August 6th-14th
Devotions in Upper Basilica
2:00 pm on Sundays & 14th
8:00 pm on Weekdays

Hymn to Our Lady, Novena Prayer,
Rosary Procession,
Adoration & Benediction of the
Blessed Sacrament

Full Schedule:
www.olcshrine.com/august-novena

OLC Basilica & National Shrine of
Our Lady of Consolation
315 Clay St.
Carey, Ohio 43316



2023

FATIMA USA

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11, 2023

7:30 PM

Spiritual Center of Maria Stein

2365 St. Johns Rd., Maria Stein, OH 45860

+ All priests are invited to concelebrate at the Mass.
- More info on reverse -

facebook.com/Fatima.usa.mass

The mission of St. Catherine's Embrace is to reach out to, assist and embrace all families in the St. George Deanery, regardless of faith affiliation, who have lost a child from miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant death. Please call the rectory 419-538-6928



St. Joseph's Parish Festival
(Ft. Jennings)
Sunday, August 13th
(10:30 - 6:00)

Chicken & Beef Dinners will be served from 10:30am-1:30pm and 4:00-6:00pm - Dine-in or Drive-thru. Meals will be \$12 each.
Big Ticket Raffle to win up to \$1,500.
Gas/Grocery Raffle (\$500 Gas Gift Card & \$500 Grocery Gift Card).
Country Store Raffle Booth, Hamburger Stand, Bingo, Kids games/inflatables, Farmers Market, Kids Tractor Pull & more! For more information, visit www.stjosephfortjennings.org/parish-festival

the mustard seed

Catholic Gifts & Educational Resources

Mustard Seed Gift Shop normal business hours
Tues, Thurs, & Fri 9:00am - 5:00pm;
Wed 12:00pm to 8:00pm;
Sat 8:00am - 1:00pm

Phone number 419-538-7220 www.mustardseedgiftshop.com
Brenda Maag 419-235-3106
Julie Barlage 419-303-5366

Divine Grace

FertilityCare™

Featuring NaPhoTECHNOLOGY®

Providing Education on the
CREIGHTON MODEL
FertilityCare™ System

to Empower Women and Couples to
UNDERSTAND, MAINTAIN, and
APPRECIATE their Health and

Fertility in a way that is cooperative with our Catholic faith.

Contact Wendy Imm, BSN CFCP for more information at 614-634-1043
or divinegracefertilitycare@gmail.com

Leading the FLOCK

BY BISHOP DANIEL E. THOMAS



The Eucharist and the Priesthood

“There can be no Eucharist without the priesthood,
just as there can be no priesthood without the Eucharist.”¹

These words of Pope Saint John Paul II have echoed over and over again in my daily prayer during this season of Eucharistic Revival. It has been clear to me since becoming your bishop that here in the diocese of Toledo, there is a deep and evident love for the Eucharist, and a deep and evident love for the priesthood! Yet many of our faithful may not be aware that the number of priests in our diocese has been declining for several years; that many priests are now serving multiple parishes, some to the point of exhaustion; and that, in the past few years, the number of diocesan seminarians has also declined.

In some ways, these trends should be no surprise. The past two decades have seen a sharp decline in Catholic parish participation throughout North America and Europe. In our diocese, Mass attendance declined 47% from 2005 to 2022. During that period, 37% fewer children were baptized and 45% fewer people received Confirmation. These numbers clearly indicate that there are not as many people practicing the faith in our diocese, which means there is a smaller pool of possible candidates for the priesthood and subsequently a lower number of seminarians.

The reality of our diocese mirrors national trends. From 2014 to 2021, the total number of seminarians in the USA decreased 22%.² Vocation directors cite many contributing factors that go beyond the obvious rise in secularization and the priority shifts of a generation

averse to lifelong commitment and riddled by “fear of missing out” (FOMO). The tense and confusing ecclesial climate seems to be discouraging young men from answering the priestly call. The scandal of priestly sexual abuse has also caused hesitation about entering seminary. Certainly, the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact: the inability of the vocations office to host typical in person events, and the rise in anxiety for young adults, were obstacles to healthy discernment.

So what should we do? With the tide rushing forcefully in the wrong direction, should we just give up? St. Paul’s words come to mind: “where sin increased, grace abounded all the more” (Romans 5:20). Do we believe that He can and will curb the tide? Do we believe that He can make the difference? Do we believe and hope in Him to draw men to the priestly vocation? We believe!

Salvation history teaches us that whenever humanity moves away from God, an abundance of divine grace is available to the faithful who are open to it. The Lord uses the service of his prayerful people to lead humanity back to God. Here and now, we are the people the Lord is depending on to open the eyes of hearts and minds to see the reality of our situation and to address head on our need for priests. It takes the joyful, faithful witness of priests themselves coupled with the support and encouragement of all the lay faithful.

¹ Pope John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery. On the Fiftieth Anniversary of My Priestly Ordination*, Doubleday, New York, 1996, p.77-78. See also: “Letter of Pope John Paul II to Priests for Holy Thursday”, 28 March 2004. Available online: https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/2004/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_20040406_priests-holy-thursday.html

² Vocation Ministry, *The State of Priestly Vocations in the United States*, 2023, p. 23. Available online at: <https://vocationministry.com/stateofpriestlyvocationsreport/>.

Jesus encouraged his disciples not to give into despair when faced with small numbers of ministers and a culture greatly in need of His message. "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:36-38). Jesus taught His disciples that sometimes, the only solution is prayer and fasting! Thus, I invite every Catholic in the Diocese of Toledo to do two things to implore the Lord of the harvest for more laborers to be ordained to shepherd the Church in our diocese: these are simple, practical, and doable!



First, I ask every Catholic to pray one Hail Mary per day for an increase of priestly vocations. I especially encourage families to add this Hail Mary to their prayer before meals, regular daily prayers or family rosary, as a way of encouraging their children to seek God's call for their life. Mother Mary will intercede for us with her Son for an increase of priests in the Person of her Son!

Second, I ask all who are able to offer some form of intentional fasting or penance each Friday for this same intention. The fasting or penance might be foregoing a meal, abstaining from meat, avoiding snacks between meals, or some other small sacrifice that can be united with Jesus' loving offering of his life for the salvation of the world on Good Friday, the very sacrifice we encounter in the Eucharist.

At a diocesan level, I kindly request that every parish offer some time of Eucharistic Adoration each week for the intention of an increase in priestly vocations. This might be a new addition to the parish calendar, or it might mean encouraging prayers for vocations during an already scheduled period of weekly Exposition and Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Many of our recent seminarians have come from parishes where Eucharistic Adoration for vocations is regularly offered. I also ask every parish in the diocese to pray specifically

for an increase of priestly vocations each week at Mass during the Universal Prayer.

Without an increase of priestly vocations, we risk not having enough priests to celebrate the Eucharist. In challenging times like ours, faithful Catholics need the Eucharist more than ever to sustain them in their mission of sharing the faith with the large number of

people in northwest Ohio who are distant from Christ and his Church. The Eucharist and the priesthood are inseparable.

While the challenges we face may seem daunting, I ask that you approach your prayer and fasting/penance for priestly vocations with **hope**. Just think, if every parish in our diocese sent just one man to the seminary every ten years, we

would have 122 seminarians over a ten-year period. If just half of them were ordained priests, we would be ordaining an average of over 6 men per year! This would be a huge shift from our current 20-year average of less than 2 ordinations per year. Dare we hope?

The word "revival" comes from the Latin verb *re-vivere*, meaning "to live again" and "to restore to life." During this parish year of the Eucharistic Revival, please join me in praying that enthusiasm for priestly vocations might be born anew in the hearts, minds and souls of young men throughout our diocese, leading to a generous response to Christ. We pray that their future ministry, especially their celebration of the Eucharist, will empower many people in Northwest Ohio to live out their Catholic faith with renewed zeal. "There can be no Eucharist without the priesthood, just as there can be no priesthood without the Eucharist."

Many resources to promote priestly vocations are available at: <https://toledopriesthood.org>

+ Daniel E. Thomas

Most Rev. Daniel E. Thomas
Bishop of Toledo
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