

TIDINGS

OF HOLY NAME OF JESUS NATIONAL CATHOLIC PARISH

A Monthly Newsletter of Information and Events

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Month of April

No. 4

Theological Reversals? – Part II

Easter is a reminder that the resurrection has made all things new. (See Rev. 21:5) If Jesus' ministry and message ended with the cross, then our focal point as believers would always be receding into the past. But Easter assures us that Jesus is ever in our present. The resurrected Jesus offers the closing words of Matthew's Gospel. He promises: "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (28:20) This statement is one of two bookends that are found at either end of the Gospel. The other is: "They shall name Him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." (1:23) The first and last thought conveyed by the Evangelist is that Jesus is an ever present reality. Easter is the powerful reminder that the past is no more sacred nor authentic than is the present because the resurrected Jesus is with us always.

The present will not contradict the past because it is the same Jesus. But the present accepts the inevitability of the evolution of the past because Jesus lives in the present with us. In March we celebrated the 113th anniversary of our church denomination. 113 years is less than a blink of an eye in human history, and all of human history is less than a blink of an eye in the story of creation. Yet we are not the church we were 113 years ago. The change in our church in little more than a century is obvious. Since we have changed, Jesus by necessity meets us under new circumstances. In Jesus' relationship with us for these 100+ years, He has changed, then how much more certain can we be of change over the millennia?

This is a pragmatic philosophy. Pragmatism is derived from the Greek word for *a thing done*. It does not focus so much on concepts as it does on consequences. It asks what works. Its search for truth is orientated toward practical results. I bring this up because philosophy has been a traditional tool of religious thought. Greek philosophy, for example, is found in the Greek sections of the Old Testament, in the writings of Paul, and most especially in the works of the Church Fathers. This Greek philosophy was a contemporary tool used by people of faith to comprehend the mystery

of God. And Greek philosophy posited that the perfect could not change because if it changed then that implied that its previous state was not as perfect as its subsequent one. Thus the perfect God could never change.

This seems at odds with much of Jewish theology that is based on the changing history of Israel, how God has revealed Himself through this people and their evolving story. This in turn is carried forward into Christian theology with the concept of the Incarnation, that God has entered history as one of us. In a first draft of our Confession of Faith (1901), Fr. Hodur wrote: "God suffers and rejoices with and in the world ..." (*Hodur, 1986, p.1*) The idea of change has not been anathema in these sacred traditions. The ancient Jews transformed many of the creation stories of their neighbours and retold them as their own. Within the Bible itself, the older laws of a semi-nomadic Israel are recapitulated in Deuteronomy for a settled people. In the New Testament, you can watch as the authentic Pauline letters become more socially conservative in the Deutero-Pauline letters as the church becomes more settled and tries to acclimate herself into Roman society.

Change is inherent in God's revelation to us if for no other reason than the fact that we change. This is pragmatism. If once we accepted Greek philosophy to express our ideas of God, then we must also be open to a pragmatic philosophy of God based on our experience of God. And this has been the teaching of our church. In that same 1901 Confession, it is written: "Constant rules [of transformation] to which He Himself must yield because they are inseparable properties of His being [and in this way] the existence of God reveals itself externally." In other words, God allows change in His nature, creation and revelation by His omnipotent choice.

It is with this preface in mind that next month, Mary's month of May, I will turn to the proposed revisions offered by the National Clergy Conference to our formal rejection of Mary's Immaculate Conception and her physical assumption.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
MONTH OF APRIL

April 1, 2010 – **HOLY THURSDAY**. Mass and liturgy of the day at 6:00pm. (Please note special time) Followed by a Pot Luck Supper at 7:15pm in the parish hall

Bp. Francis Hodur, organizer of our church denomination, was born on this day in 1866.

April 2nd – **GOOD FRIDAY**. Church will be open throughout the day for private prayer.

Youth Stations of the Cross at 4:00pm.

Mass of the Pre-Sanctified at 7:00pm.

April 3rd – **HOLY SATURDAY**. Liturgy of blessings to prepare for Easter at 8:00am.

Easter foods will be blessed in homes by invitation.

Easter foods will be blessed in church at 5:00pm.

April 4th – **EASTER SUNDAY**. Resurrection procession and holy Mass begin at 9:00am.

Children's Easter activity in the parish hall at 10:30am.

April 6th – **Bible study group** will resume at 7:00pm in the parish hall

April 9th – Monthly visitations to the sick and the shut-in of the parish. (Please note special week)

April 13th – Monthly meeting of the Parish Committee at 7:00pm.

April 18th – Polish Dinner at noon at our sister parish in Northampton.

Monthly meeting of the Adoration Society at 10:00am (Please note special week)

April 19th – Bible study group will meet in the parish hall at 7:00pm.

April 25th – Pancake breakfast will be served in the parish hall after the 9:00am Mass.

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HOLY WEEK LITURGIES

April 1st is **Holy Thursday**. On this day the church commemorates Jesus' Last Supper and His capture at the Garden of Gethsemane. The day's liturgy begins with the Mass, which repeats the words of Jesus at the Last Supper: "This is my body; This is my blood." The Blessed Sacrament is then removed to the Altar of Repose and the rest of the sanctuary is disrupted to signify the desecration of Jesus' body as His Passion begins with the arrest at Gethsemane. On this night of the institution of the Holy Eucharist, all of us should strive

to receive Holy Communion. With this in mind, Mass will be offered at 6PM and will be followed by a Pot Luck supper at 7:15pm. This will help us to keep the two hour fast so that we can all receive Communion this night. All those attending the supper should sign-up at church by March 28th.

On **Good Friday** the church will be open throughout the day for private prayer. The holiest hours are from noon until 3PM, the traditional hour of Jesus' death. As we remember the crucifixion and death of the Son of God, our lives should reflect the solemnity of this day. Meals should be simple. Activities limited. Try to spend the day without the distraction of television, radio or computer. I promise, your head will not explode. Make time for church. The youth will read the Stations of the Cross after school at 4PM. The starkness of the day is conveyed powerfully in the liturgy of the Mass of the Pre-Sanctified, which will be conducted in a dimly lit church at 7PM. How can we not actively remember Jesus on the day He died for us?

Holy Saturday marks the end of the Lenten season, the end of our 40-day journey of spiritual penance and preparation. Jesus had promised that He would resurrect on the third day. Trusting in that promise, the church prepares on Holy Saturday for the resurrection. While Jesus lies dead in the tomb, we prepare for the mystery of Easter. New light is brought into the church, the new Word is proclaimed, and water, the symbol of all new and regenerate life, is blessed. This liturgy begins at 8AM. Easter foods will be blessed in your homes by invitation, and will be blessed again at the church at 5PM. If you have never participated in the food blessing, a flier is available at church explaining the symbolism of all the food items blessed. This practice carries the presence of the church into your homes as you break your fast after the Easter morning Mass.

EASTER SUNDAY

With the 40 days of Lent as our foundation, we are now prepared to approach the empty tomb and feel again the wonder, promise and joy that Jesus has in fact resurrected, that He has conquered death, and that He now lives among us forever. Easter is the holiest day of the entire church year. The liturgy begins with the glorious proclamation: "Come rejoice our Lord is risen!" The Blessed Sacrament is taken in procession to the four

corners of the church to symbolize the world-wide and timeless significance of the resurrection for all people. Easter changed those first witnesses two thousand years ago, and may we pray that it will change us as well.

After Mass a children's activity will be conducted in the parish hall for those 11 and younger, which will include treats and games. Please feel free to invite your friends and relatives to come and join us on this most holy of all days.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

Our ecumenical Bible study group will reconvene on the Tuesday after Easter. We will continue to read from the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew is writing for an early Jewish-Christian church. His concerns offer an insight into the life of the early church that we today may not recognize nor appreciate.

I know that many of you have an interest in developing a better understanding of the Bible. This will only happen by opening the book, and when we begin to read we may discover questions that we never imagined. This is the beginning of learning. This is where our group discussions can help us all to better comprehend the Word of God. I hope if you have an interest in that book on all of our shelves that you will take the first step and come to our first meeting on April 6th. We meet for one hour on alternate weeks, which adds up to only two hours a month. The time commitment is not great, but hopefully the benefits may be. Our Bible study is open to non-members as well. If someone you know may enjoy this gathering, feel free to invite them to come along with you.

When we complete our reading of Matthew, we will then move on to a radically different perspective of the earliest church, and that will be found in the Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

On Sunday, April 25th, we will hold a Pancake and Sausage Breakfast in the parish hall immediately after our 9:00am Mass. A flier with all the information is included in this newsletter. We thank Mary Ellen Ahearn and Cindy Hubbard for organizing this breakfast for the parish.

YOUTH CONVOCATION

This summer's National Youth Convocation will be held at Monmouth University located at the Jersey Shore in West Long Branch, New Jersey. The Convo will be held from July 26th -30th. The

theme of the Convo is extremely creative and catchy. It is "Convo 2010: Governed by God." In their logo the "0" between the 2 and the 1 is created by the word "commandments." It refers to the Two Commandments of Love and the Ten Commandments, both of which outline how we are to be "Governed by God." Along with the sessions, a trip is planned to both Ellis Island and to the Statue of Liberty, and also a "private beach bonfire bash." The Convo is open to parishioners aged 12-18, with adults serving as chaperones. Information has been e-mailed to families of teenagers. For more information, contact the rectory.

ORGAN RESTORATION

Our church organ was crafted in 1868. Southfield Organ Builders has refurbished the instrument at a cost to the parish of \$9,000. With their work now completed, "this instrument can furnish many more years of service to the Church." Music adds an irreplaceable gift to our liturgies, and our organ has been the main-stay of our church's music program for all of our 80 years. If our church music is important to you, we ask you to make a donation to our organ restoration appeal to help defray the cost to the church.

PAW SOX GAME

Spojnia District 3 is planning a trip to the Pawtucket Red Sox on Saturday, June 19th. A cookout will be held at the Central Falls, RI parish at 4PM and then there is a short drive to the stadium for the 6PM game. Ticket prices are \$10 for youth members of Spojnia, and \$14 for everyone else. If interested, please speak with Fr. Calvo as soon as possible. This will allow us to purchase the best seats possible, and we also need to figure out our transportation plans.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

The following donations have been received recently: Mary Lou Fortier, \$50 (organ); Chris Piekarski, \$50 (organ); Bob & Pat Blakeslee, \$50 (organ); Janice Dagilus, \$75 (organ); Carolyn Rapelye, \$25 (organ); Alice Maiewski, \$100 (organ); Walter & Maryann Piekarski, \$50 (organ); Edward & Caroline Wykowski, \$100 (windows); Edward & Rebecca Sabelawski, \$50; and a very generous donation from the Sunday Quilters, \$1,000 (hall dehumidifier system) and \$500 (organ & windows). Thank you all for your donations that help us maintain and improve our parish facilities.

*Celebrate Spring
and an
Old New England Tradition!*



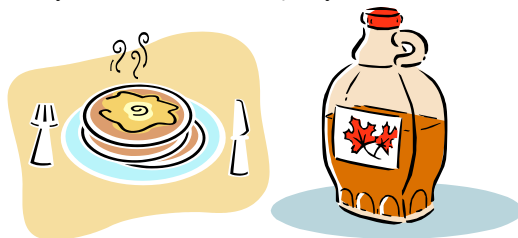
**Come to the Holy Name of Jesus Church
Pancake Breakfast!**

15 Thayer Street, South Deerfield, MA

Sunday, April 25, 10:00 AM

- Tickets now available, call Fr. Randy @ 665-2129
(pick up your tickets at the door at 10:00 a.m.)
- Or see Peg Kostiuk after church every Sunday until 4/25

\$8 - adults, \$5 - children



MENU:

Delicious Homemade Pancakes
Hearty Homemade Home Fries
Scrumptious Scrambled Eggs
Yummy Fresh Sausages
100% Pure Local Maple Syrup
Coffee, tea, OJ and cranberry juice