

TIDINGS

OF HOLY NAME OF JESUS NATIONAL CATHOLIC PARISH

A Monthly Newsletter of Information and Events

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Month of August

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A RELEVANT CHURCH – Part I

One of the gifts that I received for my 25th anniversary of Ordination was the book *The Story of Painting* by Sr. Wendy Beckett, the nun you may have seen on PBS. It is a survey of Western art from Gothic to Modern. It was a joy to peruse the pages of the book, to take-in the art reproductions, but then I reached the chapters on Modern art. I have never been a fan, so these pages I read rather than perused. I was bored by Mark Rothko's *Untitled (Black and Gray)*. It is just that, a square canvas of black and gray, and it was painted a year before he committed suicide, as if anyone should be shocked that he was in a state of depression. A contemporary of Rothko's was Barnett Newman whose artistic style Sr. Beckett describes as: "A solid block of a single color punctuated by what Newman called 'zips.'" *Yellow Painting* is a perfect example: two straight white lines that differ slightly in width zip vertically through the painting at either edge." (p. 689) The white is supposed to make us concentrate on the yellow. So what?! After looking at more Modern art than I cared to, and after reading the explanation of the art, I am even more certain that I have no personal appreciation for its aesthetics. But the point I wish to make is that even though I was not impressed with the art form to begin with, even though I remain unimpressed, I at least tried to give it a chance. I at least tried to understand it a little bit better so that maybe I could appreciate it as art.

With this said, I report that I submitted an article for publication in God's Field and Straz concerning women's Ordination in our church. [The article appears on our website, under "sermons," and under the title *Women's Ordination*.] The article reported on a Central Seniorate retreat on this subject held on June 13th, and was sent in to our church publications on the 14th. To date I have received no reply concerning this submission, whether it has been rejected, why it has been rejected, or even if it has been received. I know that our church publications are looking for articles, but they must not be accepting controversial articles, which leaves the publications reporting on staid topics and fundraisers.

Early in the story of our church, our printed publications were thought provoking and daring. Walter Lasinski told me numerous times that Bp. Hodur would seek pro and con submissions for publication on important topics. This would make sense considering that he believed in the "evolution" of church thought. Take for example the topic of celibacy's reversal. It was discussed in 1904, 1914 and finally repealed in 1921 – after 17 years of discussion. Where has this vitality gone?

The Pew Research Center has reported recently that less than half of the adults under the age of 30 say religion is very important in their lives. As testimony to this figure I point to the example of my alma mater, Smith College in Northampton, MA. Due to the steep decline of Smith students worshipping on campus or using the services of college chaplains, these offices have been retired according to the *Smith Alumnae Quarterly Summer 2010*. A new student-led Spirituality in Action group hopes to fill the gap. One of their members commented: "Too often and too long the dominant opinion has painted religion to be dogmatic with empty rules, violent, and devoid of intelligence. It's time another opinion comes to rise." (p. 10) We can argue against the poll, the firings and the opinion, but we cannot hide our heads in the sand that to many young people, women (Smith is an undergraduate woman's college) and educated people, religion is becoming less and less relevant, and some of it has to do with our predilection towards the "dogmatic with empty rules." We choose not to discuss too many topics and this leaves us repeating the same old topics, and this leads to an erosion of relevancy.

This is not about women's Ordination per se. This is about being open to serious and meaningful dialogue within this democratic church of ours. If the ideas offered are controversial, encourage a rebuttal. If the only defense of our official positions is to leave them unchallenged, then they are probably not defensible, and people are smart enough to realize this, and to then count religion as less and less relevant in their lives.

<To be continued ...>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
MONTH OF AUGUST

August 1, 2010 – Early Summer Mass at 7:45am.
August 3rd – Bible study group will meet in the parish hall at 7:00pm.

August 4th – Fr. Calvo will be away on vacation from this date through the 7th. In case of an emergency, please contact Fr. Sen. Soltysiak at 413-562-4403.

August 10th – Monthly meeting of the Parish Committee at 7:00pm.

August 11th – Requiem Mass for Bps. Thaddeus Zielinski and Francis Rowinski, the third and fourth Prime Bishops of our church, at 7:30am.

August 13th – Monthly visitations to the sick and the shut-in of the parish.

August 15th – **Feast of the Dormition**. Flowers and herbs will be blessed before Mass. The faithful are encouraged to bring their own bouquets for the blessing.

ANNUAL CHICKEN BARBECUE at the Hatfield Lion's Club Pavilion from 12:000 – 5:00pm. Fr. Calvo will be leaving to attend the diocesan **Youth Retreat** at 4-H Camp Howe and will return on the 19th.

August 22nd – Outdoor Summer Mass if the weather permits.

August 23rd – Bible study group will meet in the parish hall at 7:00pm.

August 29th – Youth Sunday. Special collection will be accepted for the Youth Fund of the church.

Monthly meeting of the Adoration Society at 10:00am.

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“There is no such thing as a little freedom. Either you are all free, or you are not free.” - Walter Cronkite.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

We are nearing the end of Matthew's Gospel. When we complete this early Jewish-Christian text, we will move on to St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, which will offer us a marked contrast from Matthew's church. In this way I hope we can come to appreciate the vitality and complexity of the earliest church, and its implications for churches today.

During these hot summer months our schedules offer us a chance to slow down. I hope that some of you will take advantage of this more relaxed

schedule to come and learn more about the Word of God. The text and our discussions may be able to open up a whole new way of thinking about our faith and that book that sits un-opened on too many of our shelves. Please think about coming out on the 3rd and 23rd for our meetings.

PRIME BISHOPS' REQUIEM MASS

20 years ago Bp. Francis Rowinski died on August 4th and then one week later Bp. Thaddeus Zielinski died on the 11th. I will be out of town on the 4th, but a combined Requiem Mass for our third and fourth Prime Bishops will be offered at 7:30am on August 11th. You are invited to join me as we remember these good and devoted men of the church.

FEAST OF THE DORMITION

This Marian feast falls on a Sunday this year. To recall Mary's death and spiritual assumption into the heavens, the church blesses flowers and herbs. The cut flowers and herbs have been separated from the root and life source, but the flowers remain beautiful nonetheless and the herbs remain healing and helpful. In the same way, even though Mary has died physically, she remains a beautiful example of the Christian life, and through her intercession in heaven she remains a powerful help to all who call to her in prayer.

I hope that those who are at church on this day will bring their own bouquets of flowers and herbs to be blessed. Please remember that once blessed the bouquets carry a bit of the church into your homes and they should be treated accordingly. When the bouquets have passed, please let them decompose in your gardens. Please do not throw them away in the trash since they have been blessed.

ANNUAL CHICKEN BARBECUE

Our annual Chicken Barbecue will be held at the same spot – the Hatfield Lion's Club Pavilion, but on a new date – the third Sunday of August rather than the first Sunday. Tickets have been distributed at church and to those not in attendance they have been mailed to your homes. Additional tickets for the barbecue and raffle are available after Sunday Masses and through the rectory until August 8th.

If you can help with the donation of charcoal, these will be accepted whenever you would like to bring them by the church. Monetary donations are

always appreciated, and they will be used to help defray our costs.

This is also a labour intensive undertaking. If you have not yet volunteered and would be willing to help out your church, please call either Don Skroski (665-3435) or the rectory. And thank you for your assistance!

DIOCESAN YOUTH RETREAT

The 2010 diocesan Youth Retreat will be held once again at 4-H Camp Howe in Goshen, MA. It will be held from August 15th – 19th. The theme of this year's Retreat is *Living on a Prayer*. The cost is \$135 per person. Camp Howe offers lake swimming, a rock wall for climbing, archery and crafts, not to mention glorious night skies and the freedom from computers, televisions and phones. We hold organized recreational activities and also give the afternoons over to free time for the participants. We will be traveling to play miniature golf in Hadley, or if it rains that day, bowling in Northampton. Then, lest we forget, it also gives us a chance to learn more about Christ and church, and to worship and to pray together. The Retreat is open to all youth of the parish between the ages of 8 and 17. We also could use chaperones. Non-members may be eligible to attend, but the pastor must be notified beforehand or the application will not be accepted. Registration and health forms are available through the rectory.

In case of an emergency during the day please call the Camp Office at 268-7635 and during the evening please call the rectory and the message will be forwarded to me at Camp Howe. Please allow as much time as possible for me to arrive since I will be traveling from Goshen.

PRE-SYNODAL COMMITTEE

I realize that we have recently elected our lay delegate to the General Synod at Niagara Falls, Canada (Shirley Mietlicki-Floyd), but we also need to start thinking about planning for our Diocesan Synod, which will be hosted by our Central Seniorate in 2012.

Holy Name of Jesus has the privilege of responsibility. We have been selected to head the Pre-Synodal Committee, which at this point entails finding a suitable site to host our Synod. This will involve some travel in Western Massachusetts to visit possible hotels, etc. To date we have visited hotels in Springfield, West

Springfield and Holyoke. Our next step will be to set-up visits with more local establishments in Hadley, Northampton and Greenfield. I wish to thank the following for their help: Dorothy Stahelksi (Westfield), Chris Newman (Northampton) and from our parish Brandon Poe, Sharon Calvo, Shirley Mietlicki-Floyd, Tracy Follansbee, and Joshua & Mary Tudryn.

We will also need to eventually prepare to host delegates from throughout the diocese for two days in October 2012. I will not minimize the importance nor the commitment needed to accomplish all this successfully, but we are a democratic church, and if we take this seriously, then we have to work that much harder so that we function as a democratic church.

If you can help by serving on our Pre-Synodal Committee, and if you will be available this summer to visit sites, please speak with Fr. Calvo, and "Thank You."

YOUTH SUNDAY

The last Sunday of August is recognized throughout our church denomination as Youth Sunday. On this day at the close of summer and in anticipation of the new school year, the church offers special prayers for the youth of the church and community. We also accept your special donations for the Youth Fund of the church. These contributions help to defray the costs of events such as this summer's Youth Convocation and Youth Retreat.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

The following donations have been received recently: Robert & Mary Ellen Ahearn, \$100 in memory of Viola Benjamin and \$50 in memory of Theodore & Helen Jagen; Joe & Peg Kostiuik, \$30, in memory of Stephanie Stefanik and Joseph Supczak; Jeff & Cindy Hubbard, \$100, in memory of Viola Benjamin and \$50 in memory of Theodore & Helen Jagen (organ fund); Edward Todzia Jr., \$50, in memory of Theodore & Helen Jagen and Viola Benjamin; Edna Ahearn, \$100, in memory of Stephanie Stefanik and Joseph Supczak (This is our 1,000th recorded donation to the Capital Improvement Fund).

Thank you all for your donations that help us maintain and improve our parish facilities.

If you know of a parishioner who enters the hospital, please notify the rectory.

