

TIDINGS

OF HOLY NAME OF JESUS NATIONAL CATHOLIC PARISH

A Monthly Newsletter of Information and Events

Vol. 21 – 2008

Month of February

No. 2

IN MEMORIUM

Bp. Francis Hodur, the first bishop of our church denomination, died 55 years ago this month. He was born on Easter Sunday 1866 in Poland, and he died just before Ash Wednesday 1953 in the rectory of the church that he had served as pastor for nearly 56 years. On August 19, 1893, he was Ordained a Roman Catholic priest in Latrobe, PA for the diocese of Scranton, PA. He was then assigned as the Assistant Pastor at Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Parish in Scranton under Fr. Richard Aust. Fr. Hodur served here for 18 months. He was next named the pastor of Holy Trinity Parish in Nanticoke, PA, which was independently organized earlier in opposition to a heavy-handed pastor.

After Fr. Hodur had left, Fr. Aust's parishioners began to petition their pastor for a voice in financial matters. They were severely and brusquely reprimanded for their act of defiance. The situation escalated to the point in 1896 that a sizeable group of parishioners decided to build another church, just as had been done in Nanticoke. While work on the edifice was still in its earliest stages, they sent a delegation to a previous assistant pastor of theirs, Fr. Francis Hodur. They asked him for advice and involvement.

On March 14, 1897, at a Sunday evening gathering of this proto-congregation, Fr. Hodur accepted the pastorate of this newly born independent parish called St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr. At that time the congregation also voted to accept four resolutions: the people would control their own church property; and have a say in parish governance, in the choice of their pastor and in the naming of their bishop.

Weak attempts were made at rapprochement, but to no avail. For ignoring the orders of his clerical superiors and for assuming the pastorate of this newly formed but unsanctioned church, Fr. Hodur and his parishioners were excommunicated on October 2, 1898. This negative act was followed by the positive consequence that our founders were then inspired to chart a wholly independent course for our church.

In just four years, the reforming attention of our organizers was expanded beyond the laity's inclusion in the decision making process of the church to "matters of doctrine and administration," (*Act of Election, 1900*) with *doctrine* taking precedence. I write this article on Martin Luther King Day. As Rev. King led the bus boycott in Mobile, AL, their demands were only that any open seat be open to any person. When this administrative reform was rejected as an untoward usurpation of authority, Rev. King led the movement that would seek and eventually win the doctrinal reform against racial segregation.

When Fr. Hodur and the people of this church came to see the injustice of their voicelessness in the simple request for a say in parish administration, they then came to understand the injustice of the doctrine that supported the system. Now they were no longer willing to make administrative reforms, they were going to change their definition of Catholic. They would now speak with adjectives like *free*, and speak of a people's church. Just as Rev. King gave voice to his followers so Fr. Hodur was speaking for all those disenfranchised believers who demanded more responsibility in their church.

In less than four years we had moved from a protest movement to a reforming movement. Fr. Thaddeus Zielinski writes on this matter: "We know that our church is something infinitely greater than a protest against the doctrines and dogmas of any authoritarian church. [We are] a living expression of positive ideals and principles."

Last month we spoke about the members' commitment to the church, but we cannot ignore the fact that the church needs to make a commitment to her members. We are not just a protest against something else. We stand for a free and democratic Catholic expression of the faith. Such a church must respect the thoughts and goals, the *sensus fidei* (sense of faith) of her membership. Our commitment is not to an institution, but to the "living expression" of such a church.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
MONTH OF FEBRUARY

February 1, 2008 – Monthly visitations to the sick and the shut-in of the parish.

February 2nd – **FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION.**
Mass of the day at 9:00am with the blessing of candles.

Confession for the youth of the parish at 10:30am.

February 3rd – Polish Mass will be recited at 7:45am.

February 5th – Massachusetts Presidential Primary.
Please make every effort to vote today.

February 6th – **ASH WEDNESDAY.** Mass of the day at 7:00pm. Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series begins at 8:00pm in our parish hall.

February 8th – Bitter Lamentations will be sung at 7:00pm.

February 12th – Monthly meeting of the Parish Committee at 7:00pm.

February 13th – Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series at the Sunderland Congregational Church at 7:00pm.

February 15th – Stations of the Cross will be recited at 7:00pm.

February 16th – Requiem Mass on the anniversary of death of Bp. Francis Hodur (+1953) at 9:00am.

February 20th - Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series at the Whately Congregational Church at 7:00pm.

February 22nd – Bitter Lamentations will be sung At 7:00pm.

February 24th – Monthly meeting of the Adoration Society at 10:00am.

February 27th - Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series at the South Deerfield Congregational Church at 7:00pm.

February 29th – Stations of the Cross will be recited at 7:00pm.

*** ** * ** ** *

“The principle mark of genius is not perfection, but originality.” - Arthur Koestler.

FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION

According to tradition, on the 40th day after Jesus’ birth, the child was presented at the Jerusalem Temple. This marks the formal completion of the Christmas celebration. At the Temple a man named Simeon held the child and proclaimed Him to be the light of the world. To symbolize this prophecy, the church blesses

candles on this day for her use and for that of her members. The faithful are encouraged to bring candles to Mass for the blessing. These candles can then be used in the home at religious occasions such as the Epiphany home visitations and Communion calls. This day’s Mass will be celebrated at 9:00am.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten Season. In the Old Testament, the placing of ashes upon the head symbolized a grave and humble sorrow before God. We place ashes upon the heads of the faithful as we begin our season of penance. It helps to prepare us for the most solemn events of the entire church year. During Holy Week we recall the Passion and crucifixion of Jesus. He dies as the perfect and willing sacrifice to take away our sins. Before such a selfless and loving act of a crucified God, we humble ourselves on Ash Wednesday.

The ashes also symbolize our mortality. We will all die and eventually our bodies will return to the dust of the earth from which they came. The ashes remind us of the fleeting reality of our physical lives, and remind us quite powerfully of the immortality that Christ promises us through His death and resurrection. All who will be in church on Easter Sunday should make every effort to be at Mass on Ash Wednesday. If you cannot make the 7PM Mass in South Deerfield, Mass will be offered at 10:00AM in Northampton.

SEASON OF LENT

The season of Lent consists of the forty days between Ash Wednesday and Holy Saturday inclusively, but excluding all of the intervening Sundays. Sundays are always a celebration of Jesus’ resurrection and therefore cannot be numbered among Lent’s days of penance.

During Lent the faithful are encouraged to make a spiritual journey of renewal through abstinence and discipline. We are all asked to **fast** on Ash Wednesday and all of the Fridays of Lent. On these days we should not eat any meat, and whatever else we prepare should be simple. For those who keep the Friday fast throughout the year, they are asked to fast on Lenten Wednesdays, as well.

A lot of us practice **giving-up** something special during Lent’s 40 days. This is a worthwhile effort. Others choose to approach a Lenten

discipline from the direction of **adding** something spiritually helpful to their lives. You may wish to read the Bible more, spend more time at prayer and/or at church, or do something to help someone else. Lent is a time to build a special and personal relationship with Christ and both of these methods can prove beneficial.

During Lent we also gather in church every Friday for **Lenten Devotions**. Friday is the day of Jesus' crucifixion. On these days we sing the Bitter Lamentations one week and then recite the Stations of the Cross the next. Both help us to focus upon Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf, both help us to better appreciate the love He must have for all of us, a love that could inspire such a willingness to suffer to the point of death. Many of our parishioners have never attended any of these Friday Lenten Devotions. Maybe this year that can change. I hope you will choose to join us.

And lastly, during Lent our parish participates in the **Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series**. This is our eleventh consecutive year of gathering together with our neighbours from the local Congregational Churches. A flier is included in this month's newsletter. Please keep it handy so that if you choose at the last minute to come and join us, and I hope you will, you will know where we are meeting, who the presenter is and what the topic will be. These meetings allow us to hear different pastor's perspectives on the same theme of *Breaking Barriers – Creating Community*, and we always gather after the sessions for refreshments and fellowship.

CHICKEN BARBECUE

This year we will be trying something new at our Chicken Barbecue. It will still be held on the first Sunday of August at the same place – the Hatfield Lion's Club Pavilion. But ... this year we have hired a Polish band to play and we will have beer and wine for sale. The *Dennis Polisky and the Maestro's Men Band* will entertain us (<http://www.maestrosmen.com/index.html>). The cost of hiring the band, obtaining a liquor license, insurance and police will greatly add to the parish's cost for running the barbecue, but it is hoped that our parishioners and friends will choose to spend the afternoon with us and enjoy good food, good music and good company. The cost for tickets that include the chicken barbecue dinner and the music will be \$15 for adults and \$5

for children, and tickets to come in and just hear the music will be sold for \$5.

We are going to need many more volunteers this year than previously. We will probably, hopefully, be selling more dinner tickets for one, we will also need extra help managing the traffic into the barbecue and parking, selling tickets, serving the meal and beverages, and probably a whole lot more. To get a better grip on what this day entails we will soon be convening subcommittees on publicity, serving and raffle. If you could help in any of these ways, please attend our after-church gathering when the date for the meeting is announced. Even if you have never helped at a barbecue in the past, we need you this year. Please set aside August 3rd, and say a little extra prayer that all goes well. Thanks.

We are still running our raffle during the band's breaks. If you can donate a raffle prize, speak with either Richard Foster or Fr. Calvo. Thank you.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Due to the fact that the second Sunday of March is Passion Sunday this year, our annual meeting will be held after church on the first Sunday of March. In preparation for this meeting, I ask all church group presidents, SOCL teachers, and Parish Committee officers to have their printed reports to me at a reasonable time for inclusion in our printed material booklet.

Don Skroski, Parish Committee Chairman, has also named a Nominations Committee. If you are asked to serve your parish or diocese in some way, please give it serious consideration. This year our diocese holds her diocesan synod in October. We will need to elect delegates for this purpose also.

One of the greatest gifts of our church is her democracy, but democracy only works within a committed and active population. We may see in you qualities that can help our parish, please think about saying "yes" if asked.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

The following are recent donations to our Capital Improvement Fund. These donations help us to maintain our properties and to upgrade them when possible. We thank everyone for their continuing support of these efforts. Donations have been received from Judith Kaczor, \$25, in memory of Stanley Kaczor; in memory of Elizabeth Orloski, \$205; in memory of Caroline Puchalski, \$160; and in memory of Mary Milewski, \$50.

2008 - Eleventh Annual Ecumenical Lenten Lecture Series - 2008

Breaking Barriers - Creating Community
2 Corinthians 5:18

February 6th (Ash Wednesday)

Participants invited to Mass at Holy Name of Jesus Church at 7PM
Homily and first session offered by Rev. Richard Killough at 8PM

February 13th

Second session offered by Rev. Candice Ashenden
At the Sunderland Congregational Church at 7PM

February 20th

Third session offered by Rev. Sherril Willis
At the Whately Congregational Church at 7PM

February 27th

Fourth session offered by Rev. Cynthia Crosson-Harrington
At the South Deerfield Congregational Church at 7PM

March 5th

Fifth session offered by Fr. Randy Calvo
At the Conway Congregational Church at 7PM

March 12th

Sixth session offered by Rev. Will Sencabaugh
At the Sunderland Congregational Church at 7PM

Refreshments will be served after each gathering by the host parish. Since the Sunderland Church is hosting a second time on March 12th all parishes are asked to bring some refreshment at that time.