

TIDINGS

OF HOLY NAME OF JESUS NATIONAL CATHOLIC PARISH

A Monthly Newsletter of Information and Events

Vol. 23 – 2010

Month of January

No. 1

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

January 18th – 25th marks the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. On the liturgical calendar this observance begins with the *Feast of the Confession of St. Peter* (Why in the world our church's liturgical calendar refers to this as the *Feast of the Chair of St. Peter* is beyond my comprehension. The *chair* refers to the seat of authority of St. Peter in Rome. The historical difficulties of this proposition are enormous and well beyond the scope of this month's article, but the actual chair itself dates back only to the 9th century, some 800 years after the life of St. Peter. And most troubling of all is that this feast is symbolic of the authority of the putative successors of St. Peter, the Popes. This makes wonderful sense in all those churches that accept the universal and infallible authority of the Pope, but we do not.) and concludes with the *Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul*.

Peter and Paul are appropriate bookends for this octave of prayer. Peter represents the apostolic roots of all those churches that claim apostolic succession, that their authority can be traced back generation to generation to the twelve disciples of Jesus (cf. Matt. 28:18-20). Paul represents the apostolic roots of those churches that base their authority on their direct connection with the glorified Jesus (cf. 1 Cor. 9:1-2). Between these two apostolic bookends lie all the Christian churches, and in this shared apostolic identity lie the basis of our prayers for Christian unity.

The word to note is *unity*. The word is not *uniformity*. Peter and Paul had their disagreements (Gal. 2:11-14; 2 Peter 3:14-18), but in the end both were recognized as inspired apostolic witnesses of Jesus Christ, and for this reason both are included within the canon of the New Testament. Peter and Paul, and even the churches they organized, had their differences, but the lack of uniformity did not hinder their unity of faith. Tradition links both Paul and Peter to the city of Rome. In Paul's Epistle to the Romans an early creedal statement of the church can be discovered: "Because if you confess with your

lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (10:9) This is the basis of their unity and that of the churches they have come to represent.

Church denominations are not offensive; church exclusivity is. At our First General Synod in 1904, when we were but seven years old, our church formally declared: "Regarding other Christian communities, we declare that we do not condemn any of them, indeed we sympathize with each, insofar as it has as its purpose the ennoblement and sanctification of the person and to carry the Gospel and the peace of Jesus to humankind, but we cannot agree to the pretensions of whatsoever confession that only it is the steward of God's graces and that only its teachers are true sowers of God's seeds ..." People are different and churches need to reflect that difference so that all may feel welcome in the houses of God. Go to a museum of art and notice the people congregating around the various exhibits. One is drawn to this piece for its beauty and another to a second. Join a book club and listen to the different reasons why the same piece of literature is profound to different people. If art and literature can elicit various reactions from the same work of human genius, why would we dare imagine that the infinite God cannot be approached from many perspectives?

As a church, we have focused on religion as a relationship with God rather than as an institution of God. In 1928, Bp. Hodur explained our church to a synodal gathering in Warsaw: "With us the religious standard is our personal relationship to Jesus Christ." In the 1931 catechism of our church religion is the first question discussed and it is defined as "the relationship of man to God" – a concept notably absent from our current catechism. The institution of our church helps us in this relationship, just as all of the other Christian church institutions help their members. The church is essential, but not uniform, and in this realization is to be found the basis of our prayers for the week of Christian unity.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
MONTH OF JANUARY

January 1, 2010 – Feast of the Circumcision.

Mass at 9:00am.

January 2nd – Confession for the youth of the parish at 10:30am.

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

January 6th – **FEAST OF EPIPHANY.** Mass of the day at 7:00pm along with the blessing of incense, chalk and water.

January 7th – Epiphany home visitations begin to the homes of all parishioners.

January 8th – Monthly visitations to the sick and the shut-in of the parish.

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

January 16th – Annual meeting of the YMSofR Men's Group at Caminito's Restaurant

January 31st – Music Scholarship Sunday. A special collection will be accepted for the National United Choirs scholarship program. **ANNUAL** meeting of the Adoration Society at 10:00am.

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FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION

On New Year's Eve a Mass is celebrated at the close of the calendar year. Prayers are offered for the previous year and also for the year about to begin. New Years Day, however, does not focus on the change of calendars. Instead, this is the eighth day of Christmas. According to Jewish tradition, on this day the baby Jesus would have been circumcised in fulfillment of Abraham's covenant of faith with God. Also, on this day the child Jesus would have formally received His name. This is the event recalled during this day's liturgy. This is also our parish's Name Day. I hope that for both these reasons, plus a third that beginning 2010 in Jesus' house is a right and proper thing to do, you will join me at Mass on this special occasion.

FEAST OF EPIPHANY

According to tradition, on the twelfth day after Christmas, the Magi arrive in Bethlehem. They bring with them the gifts of frankincense, gold and myrrh. The first gift symbolizes the divinity of the newborn child who is the Son of God. The second gift represents His royalty as the Messiah, the son of King David. And the last gift, the burial spice,

foretells of Jesus' sacrificial death on our behalf as the Son of Man. At this night's liturgy, incense will be blessed to symbolize these gifts of the Magi. Also, chalk and water will be blessed because these will be used in the blessing of the homes during the Epiphany season.

I hope that you will join the church in our continuing celebration of the joys and mystery of Christmas. December 25th is the first day of the season, not the last. Keep the Christmas spirit alive in your hearts and homes by making these sacred Christmas traditions a part of your lives too. Find the time and make the commitment to be at Mass on the day of the Magi.

EPIPHANY HOME VISITATIONS

As mentioned above, the Epiphany season begins on January 6th. As the Magi ventured out to the home of Jesus in Bethlehem so the church ventures out to the homes of her parishioners during the season of the Magi. A schedule of visitations will be printed in the Sunday Bulletin throughout January. I cannot provide an exact time for my visit, but I can tell you the planned day, at least approximately because due to unexpected hospital calls, funerals, etc my schedule may change on any given day.

Upon my arrival, I would ask that the family gather with me in the room of their choice. Please turn off radios, scanners and televisions for my short prayers. I will bring the holy water. If you have a crucifix, it may be displayed in the room where the blessing will occur. Finally, if desired I will mark the doorpost of the house in chalk with the initials of the Wise Men and the year.

MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP SUNDAY

On the last Sunday of January the church asks that we accept your special donations for the National United Choir's Music Scholarship Fund. These donations allow this organization to provide financial assistance to the musicians of our church so that they may continue their instruction. It is hoped that they will then return the favour by sharing their musical gifts with the church.

If you would like an application for a music scholarship, they will soon be made available through the rectory, and will then need to be returned by April for consideration.

LAY READERS

We currently have seven lay readers in our parish. These are the parishioners who come

forward on Sundays to proclaim the Lesson of the Mass. If you wish to participate more actively in the liturgy, and public speaking does not turn your legs to mush, please think about becoming a lay reader in our church. Speak to Fr. Calvo at your convenience for additional information.

MONTHLY VISITATIONS

I currently visit 20 people with Confession and Communion on a monthly basis throughout the year. During the week of the first Friday of the month, I visit the local nursing homes and private homes where those of our parishioners live who cannot be with us at church. If you or someone you know would appreciate these sacramental visits, please notify the rectory.

ORGAN RESTORATION, WINDOW PROJECT

A special congregational meeting was held on Sunday, November 22nd to seek the parish's approval of a window replacement bid for the parish hall and also for the restoration of our church organ. It was agreed that all the windows in the church hall will be replaced with energy efficient replacement windows in order to reduce our heating costs. The approximate cost of the materials and labour is \$6,000. The approximation is due to the fact that the contractor is not sure how difficult a job it will be to replace the two bathroom windows in the hall annex. If you would like to make a donation to help defray this cost to the parish, please note "window replacement" on your check.

You may not know, but our church pipe organ was crafted in 1868. I wish I knew more about how that organ ended up at our parish in 1929, but that story is not known. Southfield Organ Builders has been contracted to refurbish the instrument. They will replace all of the "116 stickers that form the linkage from the manual keys to the chest actions," replace all the leather nuts at every linkage connection; replace the 80 year old organ blower that provides the air for the pipe organ, rebuild the pedalboard, and recover and rebush the keyboards. With this completed, Southfield Organ Builders believes "that this instrument can furnish many more years of service to the Church." All of this work does not come cheaply. The cost will be \$9,000. Music adds an irreplaceable gift to our liturgies, and our organ has been the mainstay of our church's music program for all of our 80 years. If our church music is also important to you, we hope you will consider making a donation

to our organ restoration appeal. Please note "organ restoration" on your donations. Thank you in advance for whatever you can offer.

FINANCIAL OFFICERS?

Our annual congregational meeting will take place on March 14, 2010. A Nominations Committee will be appointed before that time by the Parish Committee Chairman, Don Skroski. Prior to this call, however, we are soliciting volunteers who may be willing and able to serve as two of our financial officers. Brandon Poe is no longer able to serve as our Financial Secretary due to his work schedule as a college professor. This office is one of the most important and also most time consuming positions on the Parish Committee. For this reason we plan to divide the position of Financial Secretary into two separate offices. One would handle all the transactions associated with parishioner donations, and the second would be responsible for all church income and expenses. In this way we hope to make the job more manageable. These positions will require an ability to work on a computer.

It has not been easy to find volunteers to staff these important Parish Committee positions, and now we are looking for two people instead of one. We have doubled our expectations, but have simultaneously halved the responsibilities of these offices. I hope you will consider volunteering for one of these positions. If you would like to volunteer or if you would like more information about these positions, please speak with Don Skroski or Fr. Calvo. Thank you.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

The following contributions have been received recently to our CIF. These donations allow the parish to maintain and improve our church properties. They are: Anthony & Diann Ricchiazze, \$30, in memory of Edward Benjamin; Dr. James & Rosalind Sledge, \$200, in memory of Rose S. Boron on the 104th anniversary of her birth; George & Janet Sadowski, \$25, in memory of Mary Mitchell; Sharon Calvo, \$100; \$610 in memory of Anna Garbiel; Sharon Calvo, \$250 (organ restoration); Adoration Society, \$250 (hall window project); Adoration Society, \$500 (organ restoration); Nicholas Anderson, \$50, in memory of Anna Garbiel; Jennie Demara, \$100 (organ); Barbara Goodhind, \$100 (organ); and Louise Puchalski, \$250 (organ).