

TIDINGS

OF HOLY NAME OF JESUS NATIONAL CATHOLIC PARISH

A Monthly Newsletter of Information and Events

Vol. 21 – 2008

Month of November

No. 11

Church and State

On November 4th Americans will vote in an historic Presidential election. Since the election cycles involving President George W. Bush, there have been frequent references in the media to *Blue States* (liberal-tending voters) and *Red States* (conservative-tending voters). These designations have reflected and possibly reinforced divisions among us, and I for one am not happy to hear their frequent mention. In a democracy, difference does not equate with division, and this may be one of democracy's greatest gifts. This is what should be emphasized rather than the demographics of Red States and Blue States.

This respect for differences of opinion within a community is biblical. Some of today's religious leaders who are stridently on the right or on the left may act appalled at such a statement, but tolerance is an attribute of the earliest Christian communities. As evidence I point to the writings of James D.G. Dunn. He wrote a compelling book entitled *Christian Liberty* whose final chapter focuses on Romans 14:1 – 15:6 and the correlation between Christian liberty and community.

It is postulated that Christianity came to Rome through the evangelization of the large population of Jews who resided there, and that the Roman Christians were predominantly of the Jewish-Christian faction, as opposed to the Gentile church proclaimed by Paul and his followers. However, the Emperor Claudius expelled the Jews from his city due to the disturbance of the peace instigated by the followers of "Chrestus" (Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, 25.4), which many scholars believe is a reference to Christ (cf. Acts 18:2). In this forced expulsion, it is likely that many of the Jewish-Christians were deported while many of the minority Gentile-Christians remained in place.

Eventually, the expelled Jews and Jewish-Christians of Rome migrated back to the capital city. Due to the deportation of the majority Jewish-Christians, the church of Rome would have taken on a new orientation. The Jewish-Christians who first constituted the membership and leadership of the church at Rome would have

lost their ascendancy to the Gentile Christians who were able to remain in place.

Paul, now writing to the predominantly Gentile-Christian church of Rome, addresses the complications this reconfiguration instigates. Just as there are test-case positions today that try to define a person, for example the political questions of abortion and homosexual rights jump to mind, there was the test-case matter of Jewish dietary laws in the earliest church. The increasing influx of Gentiles into the church forced the issue of Jewish dietary laws to the forefront of the community because the differences of opinion on this issue led to physical and theological separation. Space will not allow, but these laws defined covenant identity, and their disregard by Gentile-Christians was judged anything but trivial.

The profundity of the issue Paul confronts in Romans 14:1 – 15:6 cannot be exaggerated. These laws or their abrogation defined the movement, and both sides were passionate. In Romans, Paul speaks of the "weak" as those who rely on Jesus and the Law, while the "strong" in faith trusted that Jesus alone was sufficient. Paul advises the Gentile-Christians to welcome the Jewish-Christians back into their churches and fellowship. To both groups of the reconstituted church at Rome Paul urges them not to despise or judge each other, but in Christian liberty to accept each other differences and all. Sympathy rather than obstinacy should define Christian conduct. Two believers can believe differently, but in the eyes of God both be right.

Dunn concludes his article saying: "Diversity exists not for itself, or on behalf of indomitable individualism, independent of society, but exists on behalf of society, *for* society." How Christians should act as church stands as a healthy example of how Christians should act as citizens. We can maintain our positions, but not at the expense of vilifying an opponent. Our differences are a sign of a healthy society, not one divided. May we keep this in mind as we approach closer and closer to a pivotal and emotionally charged election.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
MONTH OF NOVEMBER

November 1, 2008 – **All Saints Day** Mass at 9:00am.

Please remember to set your clocks **BACK** one hour before retiring for the night.

November 2nd – Polish Mass will be recited at 7:45am.

All Souls Day Cemetery Service at 2:00pm.

November 3rd – **All Souls Day** Mass at 7:00pm followed by the reading of the Memorial List.

November 4th – **ELECTION DAY**. Please try and fulfill your civic responsibility to vote today.

November 5th – Monthly Mass for Health at 6:30pm.

November 6th – Meeting of the Parish Mission Team in the parish hall at 7:00pm.

November 7th – Monthly visitations to the sick and the shut-in of the parish.

November 11th – **Veteran's Day**. Mass of the day at 6:15pm.

Monthly meeting of the Parish Committee at 7:00pm.

November 12th – Fr. Calvo will attend the diocesan Clergy Retreat at the Genesis Center in Westfield and will return on the 13th.

November 16th – **WORD OF GOD SUNDAY**. Mass at the special hour of 11:00am. There will be NO 9:00am Mass today.

The annual **THANKSGIVING DINNER** in the parish hall at 12:00pm.

November 23rd – Last Sunday of Pentecost. Mass at 9:00am.

Thanksgiving Ecumenical Prayer Service at the Whately Congregational Church at 4:00pm, followed by a reception in their church hall.

November 26th – Thanksgiving Eve Mass at 6:00pm.

November 30th – First Sunday of Advent. Prior to the 9:00am Mass, the blessing of the Advent Wreath and lighting of the first candle. The Christmas Wafers (Oplatki) will be blessed and available for purchase after Mass and throughout Advent.

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ALL SAINTS & ALL SOULS DAYS

November 1st is All Saints Day. On this day we celebrate the promise of eternal life with Christ in heaven. It is a joyous Mass due to our faith-based hope that physical death is not the end. We

believe that Jesus is the first-fruits of life after death, and that through the merits of His victory over death we also will experience life everlasting.

The next day is All Souls Day. This year it falls on a Sunday. The Sunday celebration takes precedence, and therefore, the Mass for All Souls Day is transferred to November 3rd. However, the All Souls Day Cemetery Service will be held at 2:00pm on November 2nd – rain or shine. At this time we pray for our loved ones buried at the cemetery. Any of us who have friends or relatives laid to rest at our cemetery should attend this Service out of respect for their memories.

Following the All Souls Day Mass on November 3rd we will read the Memorial List. Even with the joy of the promised resurrection that All Saints Day celebrates, physical death still leads to our separation from loved ones. This sorrow is what we remember on All Souls Day, and this is also the reason why we remember specifically the people who are dear to us in the reading of the Memorial List. If you would like to have someone remembered at this time, All Souls Day envelopes are located in the church vestibule.

VETERANS DAY

On the 11th day of the 11th month at the 11th hour the armistice ending WWI was signed in 1918. Quickly the day came to honour the veterans of that war. In 1954, November 11th officially became Veterans Day, and came to honour all American veterans. As veterans point out on Memorial Day, Veterans Day honours all those who have served and Memorial Day remembers all those who have died in battle. As a parish we will gather in honour of all American veterans at Mass on this national holiday. Please note the special hour of 6:15pm for this day's liturgy.

WORD OF GOD SUNDAY

The Eastern Diocese has designated the third Sunday of November as Word of God Sunday. On this day we celebrate the unique gift to our church of the sacrament of the Word of God. This summer's Youth Retreat and September's SOCL Seminar focused on this sacrament because 2009 marks the 100th anniversary of its proclamation by the Second General Synod of our church. The Bible is the written revelation of God's presence among us. Its exposition in the sermon helps to make that presence more accessible and meaningful in our lives. This sacrament brings us to God

in a way tantamount to that of the Eucharist. Both help us to better share in communion with Christ. Please remember that Mass on this day will be celebrated at the special time of 11:00am.

THANKSGIVING DINNER

Our annual Thanksgiving Dinner will take place on Sunday, November 16th at noon. Tickets will be available after Mass on October 26th, and will be mailed out to those not in church that week. An electronic sign-up sheet for volunteers has been shared with parishioners via e-mail. If you do not get e-mail notices from the church, but would like to help with this dinner please speak with Peg Kostiuk, Don Skroski or Fr. Calvo. This is a labour intensive project for our parish and your help could really make a difference. Please don't expect others to always do the work. If you are able, think about volunteering some of your time. We are looking for turkey bakers, volunteers to help on Saturday with prep-work and set-up, Sunday morning in the kitchen and the hall, to serve the meals, and also to clean-up after the dinner. We are also accepting monetary donations toward our dinner expenses to keep our costs as low as possible. Thank you.

THANKSGIVING ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE

Our local Christian churches gather together in ecumenical worship only once a year. We do so at Thanksgiving. This year's Thanksgiving Ecumenical Prayer Service will be hosted by the Whately Congregational Church, Rev. Cynthia Crosson-Harrington pastor. We will gather at 4:00pm on Sunday, November 23rd. Fr. Philippe Roux, pastor of the soon to be merged Holy Family Roman Catholic Church, will be our homilist. The collection accepted at this gathering will benefit some yet-to-be-named local charity, and will be offered as a sign of our thanksgiving for all of God's blessings upon us. If you would like to sing in the Ecumenical Choir, please speak to Fr. Calvo about obtaining copies of the music and the rehearsal schedule. Since this is the only time we gather beyond denominational walls and come together in the broad sense of our shared faith in Christ, I hope that many from Holy Name will find the time to participate in this special time of worship.

THANKSGIVING EVE MASS

On the day before Thanksgiving, Mass will be celebrated at 6:00pm. Thanksgiving is a national holiday at which time all Americans are asked to

pause and give thanks for the myriad blessings that God has bestowed upon us. You are invited to come to Mass on Thanksgiving Eve so that we can do so together in the House of God. The Gospel for this Mass tells of Jesus' miraculous cure of ten lepers, and that only one bothers to return and give thanks to Jesus. Few will take Thanksgiving seriously; few will make the effort to say a sincere "thank you" to God. We can be part of that 10% minority that does not take God's blessings for granted. I hope you will be able to join me at Mass on Thanksgiving Eve.

ADVENT

November 30th is the First Sunday of Advent. Advent is the four Sunday season prior to Christmas during which time we prepare for the coming birth of the Son of God on Christmas. On the First Sunday of Advent we will bless the Advent Wreath and light its first candle. Each week an additional candle is lit symbolizing the increasing light of Christ in the world, which culminates with the lighting of the Christ Candle at the Shepherds' Mass of Christmas Eve.

That morning we will also bless the Christmas Wafers (Oplatki) that many families use to share Christmas greetings at their Christmas Eve dinner (Wilia) or to mail to distant relatives or friends through Christmas cards. Please remember that these wafers have been blessed and should be treated accordingly. During Advent many accept the challenge to prepare spiritually by attending Mass on each of the four Sundays. I hope you may be up to the challenge. December is a hectic month, but hopefully not so hectic that we find no time for the real reason behind our celebrations.

PLEASE REMEMBER

Our parish is a monthly contributor to **St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital**. If you would like to make a contribution to this cause, please mark your check clearly for this purpose – And thank you.

Also, our **parish website** is performing a necessary function in our internet savvy world. It lets others know about us and the events taking place here, and it helps to keep our own members informed as well. Take a visit if you have not recently. If you would like to become a site sponsor for any given month, please speak with Lynnette Poe or call the rectory for details.

Summary report of the recently completed Eastern Diocese Synod

The Eastern Diocese Synod was held in Manchester, NH on October 3rd and 4th. Our parish delegates were: Fr. Randy Calvo, Brandon Poe and Shirley Mietlicki-Floyd. The Synod began with a Mass to the Holy Spirit celebrated by Bp. Thomas Gnat at Holy Trinity Cathedral. Seated in the Sanctuary were Prime Bishop Robert Nemkovich, Auxiliary Bishop Anthony Kopka, Fr. Sen. Joseph Krusienski, Fr. Sen. Joseph Soltysiak and Fr. Andrew Tenus. Fr. Robert Nemkovich Jr. served as master of ceremonies. The front pews of the Cathedral were reserved for members of the Diocesan Council and the remaining diocesan clergy. The congregation was led in song by the Chopin Choir under the direction of Tom Zywasz. After Mass a group photo was taken on the steps of the Cathedral.

After lunch, Bp. Gnat formally convened the Synod and asked Bp. Kopka to offer invocation. After Invocation, Fr. Sen. Soltysiak asked if he could interrupt the prepared Synod agenda in order to make a special presentation. The Central Seniorate was charged with compiling this year's Synod Booklet. In honor of Bp. Gnat's 50th anniversary of Ordination and 30th anniversary of Consecration, three collages of collected pictures of the bishop were displayed. Also, an anniversary booklet was then presented to all the Synod delegates in recognition of Bp. Gnat's anniversaries.

Greetings were then offered to the Synod by the Prime Bishop, the hosting Cathedral parish, the Eastern Diocese United Women's Societies for the Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, the diocesan School of Christian Living Board and the Pre-Synod Committee. The formal business of the Synod then moved on to the Mandate Committee report and the appointment of Synod officers. A special thank you to Janice Klimczak for serving as Recording Secretary of the Synod.

The Minutes of the previous Synod in Norwich, CT were accepted with minor corrections, and then Bp. Gnat submitted a written report outlining his diocesan activities over the previous four years. Prime Bishop Nemkovich was then invited to address the body. He thanked the diocese for hosting the last General Synod in 2006, the Mission and Evangelism Workshop in Fall River, MA, and the National Youth Convocation at Roger Williams University in RI. Bp. Kopka then reported on his activities and service to the diocese and church as an Auxiliary Bishop.

Frances Dobosz, diocesan treasurer, had submitted a printed report that was mailed to the delegates prior to the Synod. Both Bp. Gnat and Prime Bp. Nemkovich thanked Miss Dobosz for the timely transfer of funds from the diocese to the national church.

Fr. Robert Nemkovich Jr. and Bp. Anthony Kopka reported on the diocesan Deacon Program. To date Deacon Michael Masulli is the only candidate who has completed the course of instruction. The only candidate proceeding through his clerical orders at the present time is Cleric Joseph “Chet” Stafford. It was reported that our diocesan program has been used as the basis for the national Deacon Program.

Fr. Sen. Joseph Krusienski, SOCL Board chairman, reported to the Synod on the work of that body and especially its preparation before the centennial anniversary in 2009 of the promulgation of the Sacrament of the Word of God Heard and Preached. Emilia DeVore reported on the good work of the Adoration Society in the diocese. Fr. Nemkovich passed-on to the Synod the greetings of the Supreme Management of the Polish National Union of America/Spojnia, President Irene Jujan and Secretary General John Andrzejewski. He also acknowledged the work of District 3 here in our diocese and all the work they performed hosting the recently held Convention at Sea. Kristen Kopka, District 3 Director, reported on the fraternal activities of Spojnia in this its 100th year. And Fr. Sen. Soltysiak presented an oral report on the diocese’s Mission and Evangelism Commission.

After receiving these reports the Synod adjourned so that the delegates could move from the Cathedral complex and travel to the hotel. There the delegates registered for their rooms and we enjoyed dinner together in the Roosevelt Room of the Best Western Hotel. We then reconvened at 7:15pm. Fr. Nemkovich, as diocesan Youth Chaplain and Convo Chaplain, offered reports on the work of the Youth Commission for the past four years, concentrating on our last four diocesan Youth Retreats, and also gave a report on the recently completed National Youth Convocation. His reported was highlighted by a Power Point presentation of hundreds of pictures taken at these events. The delegates enjoyed these presentations immensely. At the conclusion of the presentation, Fr. Nemkovich presented a *children of the world* stole to Bp. Gnat in honour of his anniversaries on behalf of the Youth Commission.

Dorothy Stahelski next reported on her work coordinating the Diocesan Calendar. She urged parishes to use the calendar when scheduling their events in order to avoid overlapping events. Bp. Gnat then listed his appointments to our diocesan commissions for the next four-year term. With this business completed, the Synod adjourned for the night. A hospitality room was hosted by the Pre-Synod Committee.

The next morning at 8:00am Bp. Gnat led the Synod in a Prayer Service that centered on the sacred responsibilities of the Synod and also on the approaching anniversary of the Sacrament of the Word of God Heard and Preached. The Synod accepted the Resolution that was prepared by Fr. Sen. Soltysiak and Fr. Randy Calvo. For New Business the Synod heard

from Dorothy Stahelski about the work of the National History and Archives Commission and their plans to prepare an encyclopedia of the PNCC.

Bp. Kopka spoke on behalf of the National SOCL Commission. Five of the eight members of this Commission hail from the Eastern Diocese. He spoke about the materials that have recently been published by the Commission, and the bishop urged their use in parish SOCL classes.

Raymond Pieczarka, on behalf of the Diocesan Council, at this time presented Bp. Gnat with a monetary gift from the diocese in honor of his anniversaries of Ordination and Consecration. Fr. Nemkovich presented the bishop with an inscribed crystal president's tower in honor of the same, as also offered by the diocese.

Katherine Gnat spoke urging greater participation in the annual Prayer Service at the Cathedral of the Pines in July. She also encouraged the bishop to name a committee for the express purpose of initiating a celebration of the centennial anniversary of the Sacrament of the Word of God throughout the diocese.

Bp. Kopka offered his services in the diocese to support Sacred Vocations. He would be willing to travel to diocesan parishes to participate in their worship and speak afterwards to the congregation about the importance and dire need for Sacred Vocations.

Our parish has been asked, and has accepted the responsibility of hosting the next Diocesan Synod that will be held in 2012. A Pre-Synodal Committee will be convened in the near future to look into booking a site in our area, and then that Committee will go dormant until further preparations need to be made closer to the date of the Synod.

Bp. Gnat then thanked the people and organizations that made the Synod possible, and he concluded by offering Benediction. Fr. Calvo was then asked to offer grace before our lunch together, and at 12:01pm Bp. Gnat declared the 13th Diocesan Synod of the Eastern Diocese, PNCC adjourned.