

TIDINGS

Of HOLY NAME of JESUS NATIONAL CATHOLIC PARISH
A Monthly Newsletter of Information and Events

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Month of November

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The Skeptical Bible Reader – Part XI

Back in the 1980's our Eastern Diocese established Word of God Sunday. We did so in recognition of the unique sacrament of our church, the Sacrament of the Word of God Heard and Preached, and to continue stressing the wondrous mystery that God, that Jesus, continue to speak to us through the Bible and its inspiration.

The Mass consists mainly in the sharing of and the sharing in the Word of God and the Eucharist. When I was in the seminary and also as a young priest, I was taught that the celebrant of the Mass stood at the Main Altar to share the Word, and then approached the Sacrificial Altar for the offertory, consecration and then Communion. The distinction of location was intended to emphasize the two primary sacraments of the Mass. We receive the real presence of Christ in the Word of God Heard and Preached, and we receive the real presence of Christ in Holy Communion.

These two equal sacraments complement each other. The Word nourishes our rational connection with Christ, and the Eucharist strengthens our spiritual communion with Jesus. When our church elevated the liturgy of the Word in 1909 by synodal action to the dignity of sacrament, it was a forceful statement that the mystery of God unfolds as much through inquiry as through piety. Reverence is expressed through wonder at the unknowable, as in the Eucharist, and also through the study of the knowable, as in the Word of God.

The Special Synod of 1906 was necessitated because of the newness of a democratic Catholic church. Three years later at the Second General Synod our unique sacrament was born. I wonder if the previous turmoil led the synod delegates to realize the full import and sacred responsibility of entrusting church governance to all her members. Abuse and confusion had led to the 1906 Synod. Did 1909 respond by laying the foundation for an informed membership through the creation of a heuristic sacra-

ment, one in which there was an interplay between the Word and the community, and between a preacher and the congregation, through which all in the church grew in knowledge and were thus prepared for leadership?

In response to a fitful start of our church democracy, we did not retreat into the old confines of hierarchy. Instead, we called on the Word of God to strengthen and renew our democracy through a better-informed membership. In the oldest extant piece of Christian literature, Paul praises the Thessalonians because “the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.” (1 Thess. 1:5) And that the Word is sacrament is clear when the apostle then writes: “... you accepted [the Word of God] not as a human word but as what it really is, God's word, which is also at work in your believers.” (1 Thess. 2:13)

In 1928, Bp. Hodur explained our new sacrament by saying: “When a priest gives a few days a week to conscientiously working on his sermon and with a pure heart goes to the pulpit and preaches the Gospel to the people, then he has fulfilled the same role as did Christ and the apostles. God's Word, then, has the same sacramental significance as the other sacraments. ... God's Word, therefore, is a great sacrament in the Church. Just like Holy Communion unites a [person's] heart with the living Christ, so likewise, a priest who with apostolic ardor preaches His teachings, fulfills the divine mission on earth.” (1928 Warsaw Synod)

Hodur's next thought is revealing. It is the statement that all people are equal and that false privileges are an affront to human dignity and our “purposeful development.” He connects the Word with equality. He calls the church teacher, steward and guide, thus the importance of the sermon. This is the “great sacrament” of a democratic Catholic church.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS
MONTH OF NOVEMBER**

- November 1, 2016 – All Saints Day. Mass of the day at 7:00pm.
- November 2nd – All Souls Day. Mass of the day with the reading of the Memorial List at 7:00pm.
- November 4th – Monthly visitations to the sick and the shut-in of the parish.
- November 5th – Confession for the youth at 10:30am.
- November 6th – Monthly meeting of the Adoration Society at 10:00am.
Disabled American Veterans Veteran’s Day Service at 7:00pm at our church.
- November 7th – Bible study group will meet in the parish hall from 7 – 8:00pm.
- November 8th – Election Day. This is our privilege and our responsibility.
Monthly meeting of the Parish Committee at 7:00pm.
- November 13th – **Word of God Sunday. Mass at the special hour of 11:00am.**
Annual Thanksgiving Dinner served in the parish hall at noon.
- November 15th – Fr. Calvo will attend the diocesan clergy retreat at Mercy Center in Madison, CT and will return on the evening of the 16th.
- November 20th – Monthly meeting of Women’s Ordination Now at 10:00am.
Thanksgiving Community **Interfaith Service** at 4:00pm at the South Deerfield Congregational Church.
- November 21st – Bible study group will meet in the parish hall from 7 – 8:00pm.
- November 23rd – Thanksgiving Eve Mass at 6:00pm.
- November 27th – First Sunday of Advent.
Blessing of the Advent Wreath and lighting of the first candle; blessing of the Christmas Wafers.
- November 29th – Fr. Calvo will attend the National Doctrine Commission meeting in Scranton, PA
- November 30th – Advent Marian Mass at 7:00pm.

“Truth emerges more readily from error than from confusion.” – Francis Bacon

ALL SAINTS & ALL SOULS DAYS

November begins with these two holy days. They are two sides of one coin. As Christians we believe in life after death. Jesus’ resurrection was the first-fruits of all of ours. This is the glorious, hope-filled promise that we celebrate on All Saints Day. The Mass is in white vestments as we rejoice with all the heavenly saints that death is not the final victor, that our faith in Jesus gives us the ability to hope in eternity.

Even with this assurance of life after death, we still mourn the passing of our loved ones. Death separates them from us even if only for a time, but that separation brings us great sorrow. This we remember on All Souls Day. The evening’s liturgy is a Requiem Mass for the dead. We pray for them, and even more importantly, we remember them. If you would like to have your loved ones remembered by name at the conclusion of the All Souls Day Mass, please fill out one of the All Souls envelopes that may be found in the vestibule of the church.

VETERANS SERVICE

We have been asked by Chapter 33 of the Disabled American Veterans to host a Veterans Day Service on November 6th at 7:00pm. We will be the host site, but the Service will be prepared and led by this organization. They invite all others to come and join them. It would be nice if we would come out and support these veterans and their families as the nation approaches the observance of Veteran’s Day on November 11th.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

Our Bible study group will meet on two more occasions this month and then take a winter hiatus. We are reading from John’s Gospel and also following conversations where the Bible takes us. It may be too late to start Bible study this year unless you would like to see what it is all about before committing to it next year when we reconvene after Easter.

WORD OF GOD SUNDAY

The Eastern Diocese celebrates this special liturgy annually in recognition of the unique

sacrament of our church, the Sacrament of the Word of God Heard and Preached. This sacrament was created by the lay and clergy delegates of the 1909 Synod. I often have to wonder at the hesitancy of our church to act when we have the example in our history of designating a sacrament all on our own. This sacrament was an absolute necessity in a church that combined a Catholic faith with a democratic vibrancy. We elevate the Bible to the highest dignity of sacrament and the sermon thus becomes for the “priest the highest and most holy duty” (*Minutes, p. 65*), but the sacramental grace is also in the Word of God *Heard*. The Word empowers those who hear it, gives them the grace necessary to be informed and involved believers. This is the sacrament born in a democratic Catholic church. And this is the sacrament we celebrate on Word of God Sunday. I hope you will choose to be with us.

THANKSGIVING DINNER

Our annual Thanksgiving Dinner will take place on Sunday, November 13th at noon. On this day our Sunday Mass will be celebrated at the special hour of 11AM. If you are able to help us prepare, serve or clean-up, please speak to EJ Lafleur or Fr. Calvo. A lot of hands must come together to make this dinner fundraiser possible for OUR church. Tickets will be shared via a separate mailing.

THANKSGIVING INTERFAITH SERVICE

The annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service will be hosted by the South Deerfield Congregational Church on Sunday, November 20th at 4:00pm. Fr. Jonathon Reardon, pastor of Holy Family Roman Catholic Church, will be the homilist this year. This is the only scheduled event of the year when we gather together as people of faith regardless of where or how we worship God. The national election will have taken place before the time of this Service. Whoever wins, I think we realize that this has been a very divisive election cycle and it has brought to the fore the substantial divisions that exist in our United States. We have to work harder at bringing people together – differences and all. When did united ever mean we all

have to be the same? We have to try and foster respect for differences again. We have to do this consistently and consciously so that the message sinks in that we are a nation founded on the freedom to be different but still united. Let us come together with all of our differences intact and together offer God our thanks for His blessings upon us a nation and as individuals.

SEASON OF ADVENT

Advent is the time of spiritual preparation prior to the celebration of Jesus’ birth. Its four Sundays represent the putative 4,000 years between Adam and Jesus as the world awaited the coming of the Saviour. We all know that Christmas is rushed upon us, but not for the most important reason of all – the birth of Jesus. The humble acceptance of our full human nature by God is an ineffable mystery, but one that fills us with uncontained hope. Advent is our sacred opportunity to prepare ourselves to celebrate this awesome event. Please don’t let the less important Christmas preparations force us to skimp on the Advent preparations that are truly needed.

SPOJNIA RAFFLE

The PNU Education & Youth Committee is sponsoring a raffle. All proceeds will benefit their college stipend program. 1st Prize – New iPad. 2nd Prize – Apple TV. 3rd Prize - \$100 cash. Drawing on Wednesday, Nov. 30, 2016. Donation - \$5.00 each; 3 for \$10.00. Checks may be made payable to: *Education and Youth Commission*, and then returned to Fr. Calvo no later than November 23rd. Thank you.

PORTABLE DEFIBRILLATOR ?

The Parish Committee is looking into the purchase of a portable defibrillator for the church. These units cost in the vicinity of \$1,200, but we have a generous offer to supply one to the parish for \$750. The units require no training to be used and the one using them is covered under the Good Samaritan laws for liability and also by our church insurance policy. We are seeking donations to cover this expense. If you can make a contribution, please list *defibrillator* on the check.

YMSofR WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE

Our Parish YMSofR Men’s Club is conducting a winter clothing drive in conjunction with the United YMSofR. This means that YMSofR Branches throughout our church denomination will be doing the same. We are asking for the donation of new teeshirts, hats, underwear and socks, and for the donation of gently-used or new coats, gloves, pants and sweatshirts. The drive will continue throughout November and December. In January this collection will be shared, in our case, with Soldier On at the VA Hospital in Leeds. There are men and women only a few miles from here who have served our nation in the Armed Forces and who are now homeless or so impoverished that they suffer through the cold of winter without sufficient cover. This is wrong. We spend billions and billions of dollars on being able to go to war, but too often forget the men and women who have gone to war for us. Please be as generous as you can to help those who have served on our behalf.

SHRINER’S HOSPITAL

The parishes of the Central Seniorate are collecting aluminum can tabs. These will be turned over the Shriner’s Hospital for Children in Springfield as part of one of their fundraising events. A collection jug has been placed in the church vestibule for your donations.

UYA CHRISTMAS FUNDRAISERS

The Parish United Youth Association is again this year taking orders for *God’s Creation* calendars and Christmas ornaments. The beautiful and inspiring religious calendars may be purchased for \$8 and they will go to the first 26 orders we receive. We are also offering two different ornaments at \$8 each:



These fundraisers benefit the youth of our parish and we thank you for your support.

WOMEN’S ORDINATION NOW

The monthly meeting of this parish organization will take place after Mass on Sunday, the 20th. Fr. Calvo will report to the group about his upcoming presentation on the topic of women’s Ordination to the National Doctrine Commission on Tuesday, November 29th, in Scranton. This is a hopeful sign of increasing dialogue and mutual understanding.



CHURCH DONATIONS

As the end of the calendar year approaches, we remind our members to fulfill their financial commitments to the parish. We thank those members who give above and beyond what is expected. Without their generosity, we would be in dire straits. Every single month the Parish Committee struggles with a tightening budget. Even after successful fundraisers, our balance sheet is returned quickly to the same problem of insufficient cash flow. I hate to have to address this issue because it distracts from the work of the church, but money is a reality we cannot avoid. How I would love as pastor to not care about finances, but that is not the way it works. So as pastor I ask you to meet your financial commitments before the end of the year, and if your situation in life permits, please think about giving even more generously to our church.



However, with this said, money can never be a reason to not belong to this church. I know that some families struggle financially and that they are not capable of paying the standard commitments in full. In such a case, please approach Fr. Calvo. Arrangements will be made. We will ask you to offer what you are able and you will still be counted as a full member. We are church not corporation.

If someone you know needs a hospital visit, please notify the rectory.

Annual Thanksgiving Dinner

at Holy Name of Jesus Church
South Deerfield,
Massachusetts

Sunday, November 13th at
noon.

\$12 for adults;
\$5 for children 12 and under.

Reservations by email:
frrandy@holynamedeerfield.org

By phone: 413-665-2129



Reservation deadline: November 6th



******* Share an invitation with those you know *******