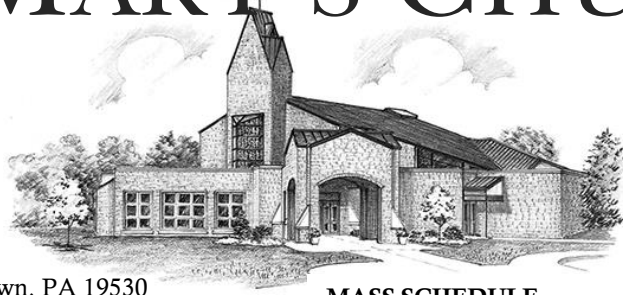


# ST MARY'S CHURCH



14833 Kutztown Road ▪ Kutztown, PA 19530

[www.StMarysKutztown.com](http://www.StMarysKutztown.com)

[www.facebook.com/stmaryskutztown](http://www.facebook.com/stmaryskutztown)

Church, Meeting Rooms, Business & Parish Offices:

Phone : 610-683-7443 ▪ Fax : 610-683-7625

Email: [Parish@StMarysKutztown.com](mailto:Parish@StMarysKutztown.com)

Religious Education Center: 610-683-6454

Email: [RelEd@StMarysKutztown.com](mailto:RelEd@StMarysKutztown.com)

## PASTORAL MINISTRY

Pastor	Fr John Maria
Pastor Emeritus	Rev. Msgr Walter T Scheaffer
Permanent Deacon	Dcn. Howard Schultz
Coordinator/Religious Educ	Mrs. Ann Pergosky
Director of Music Ministry and Parish Secretary	Mrs. Anne Sitarik

## PARISH ORGANIZATIONS

Ladies Auxiliary	Theresa Bieak & Deb Massa
Men of St. Mary's	Mr. Tom Cengeri
O C I A	Fr. John Maria

## DIOCESAN INFORMATION

Diocesan Policies and Procedures on Youth Protection:

[www.allentowndiocese.org](http://www.allentowndiocese.org)

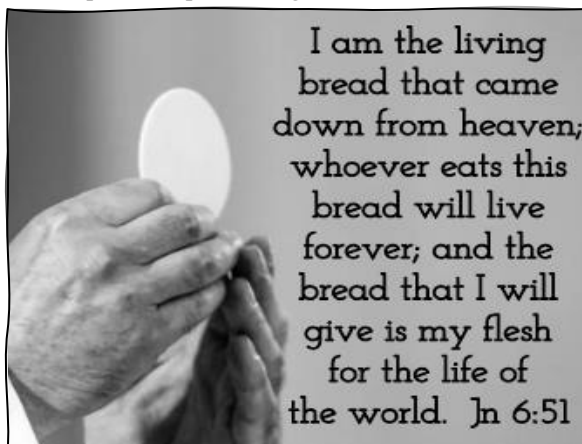
Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator:

Wendy S Krisak, Direct Telephone: (800) 791-9209

Office of Safe Environment Secretary, Youth Protection and Catholic Human Services: Pamela Russo, MSW, MS ; PO Box F, Allentown, 181-5-1538 Tele. 610-871-5200 x2204

Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service: If you have an allegation of abuse against a bishop, please contact the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service:

[www.ReportBishopAbuse.org](http://www.ReportBishopAbuse.org) or 800-276-1562



## **MASS SCHEDULE**

Saturday Vigil	4:30 pm
Sunday	8:30, 11:00am
Daily Masses	7:30am (Monday – Friday) 8:00am (First Saturdays)

**ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT** - Every Wednesday, 7-8 pm *and* First Friday of the Month, 8 until 9am

**SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM** – Baptism is celebrated at various times, often 11a Mass, the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month. Baptisms are also scheduled privately upon arrangement with families. Parents must contact the Religious Ed Office to arrange Baptismal Prep sessions and learn all the details.

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION** - Saturday, 3:30-4:20p, Sundays 8:00-8:20; 10:30-10:50 am, Wednesdays 7:00-8:00p and by appointment

**SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK** – Those who are dangerously ill or facing serious surgery may receive this healing Sacrament. Please contact Father John Maria to make arrangements.

**SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY** – Congratulations! Couples must contact Father John at least six months in advance of desired date. Marriage Preparation is required for proper celebration of a valid and Sacramental marriage.

**PROSPECTIVE GODPARENTS/SPONSORS** asked to serve as Baptismal Godparents or Confirmation sponsor must request an eligibility certificate from the parish priest. To serve in this special role parishioners must: Be in full communion with the Catholic Church; Attend Mass weekly; have received Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, Reconciliation & Confirmation; Married individuals need be validly married in the Catholic Church.

Please contact the Parish Office and allow 2 weeks to process.

**HOMEBOUND** – Parishioners homebound and unable to attend Mass please contact the Parish Office to arrange visitation, to receive Holy Communion

**HOSPITALIZED** - Call the Rectory to notify of someone in the hospital so we can pray for and possibly visit them. Each hospital in our Diocesan boundaries is either covered by a local parish or has a priest on call at the hospital.

**PARISH MEMBERSHIP** - Welcome to St. Mary's Parish! Please contact the Parish Office to meet with Father John and become registered. We also ask those who move to notify the parish

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** – Education for parish children occurs September 10 through April. Contact Religious Education office: 610-683-6454 for registration.

### *Center-based*

- Levels 1 to 5 meet every week, Sundays, 9:40-10:50am
- Level 6-8 meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays, 6-8pm
- Youth Group (9-12) Stay tuned for upcoming events.

*Home-based* Arrangements may be made for select grade levels, contact Ann Pergosky

20<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, AUGUST 18, 2024

*We are a welcoming community called to deepen and share our faith*

0195-1

# MASS Intentions

Mon	08-19	7:30a	Jerry Bowen
Tue	08-20	7:30a	Harry Geidner
Wed	08-21	7:30a	Phyllis and Bob Amelio
Thu	08-22	7:30a	William and Celestina Keller
Fri	08-23	7:30a	John and Eleanor Giachero
Sat	08-24	4:30p	Kathleen Bowen
Sun	08-25	8:30a	People of the Parish
		11:00a	John and Patricia Callahan

Call parish office to sponsor altar flowers in someone's memory

## READINGS and CELEBRATIONS for the WEEK

Sun	08-18	20 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time-Pr 9:1-6; Eph 5:15-20; Jn 6:51-58
Mon	08-19	Ez 24:15-23; Mt 19:16-22
Tue	08-20	Ez 28:1-10; Mt 19:23-30
Wed	08-21	Ez 34:1-11; Mt 20:1-16
Thu	08-22	Ez 36:23-28; Mt 22:1-14
Fri	08-23	Ez 37:1-14; Mt 22:34-40
Sat	08-24	Rv 21:9b-14; Jn 1:45-51
Sun	08-25	21 <sup>st</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time- Js 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b; Eph 5:21-32; Jn 6:60-69

## MUSIC MINISTRY

THIS WEEK		NEXT WEEK
4:30p	Moore, Mark Casey, Peggy	Sitarik, Anne Casey, Peggy
8:30a	Talarico, Tim Cebenکو, Steve	Spanier, Chris Cebenکو, Steve
11:00a	DeWald, Heather Talarico, Tim	Pirnot, Tom Talarico, Tim

Collection info	OLG	In Church	Expenses
Regular Collection	\$2,828.00	\$4,132.00	
Building Fund	\$5.00	\$1,000.00	
Capital Campaign	\$25.00	\$809.00	
Parish Partnership	\$10.00	\$52.00	
Other Reg. Collections	\$20.00	\$30.00	



### HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR ONLINE GIVING?

1. Visit [www.stmaryskutztown.com](http://www.stmaryskutztown.com)
2. Click on the Online Giving link
3. Complete the online registration form. It's that simple! For more info or help setting up your account please contact the parish office.

Please pray for the sick of our parish.....  
..... and those that care for them



Logan Alkons	Bijou Greenwood	Diana Novi
Evie Barletta	Muriel Hadnagy	Joanne O'Connell
Caleb Bauer	Devon Hanna	Benedicta Otchere
Christopher Bennett	Jacqueline Hartz	Rick Padilla
Claudia Berg	Linda Haurus	Ed Pilarski
Greg Bradford	Kathy Henry	Pat Regensburger
Monica Bradford	Glenn Hertzog	Rosemarie Reimert
Bradford family	Lillian Karch	Bill Pettit
William G. Brady	Michael Karch	Kerry Rauenzahn
Nadia Cahill	Joanne Kear	Patrick Ritter
Meaghan Clark	Patricia Keeney	Megan Roth
David Covey	Jane Kern	Nina Hertzog
Nancy Devlin-Litinsky	Milton Kern	Rundle
Dave Ebling	Carol Korbe	Richard Rusconi
Trent Eidle	John Korbe	Tina Scatamacchia
Patricia Farabaugh	Henry Kryeski	Jim Sherman
Ashley Geidner	Edward & Rosemary Law	Barbara Shidisky
Farhat	Rick Lewis	Tracy Snyder
Paula Fehlinger	Julie Lindsey	Nicole Sosik
Florentine Firlein	Eva Malanczuk	Arlene Stadalnik
Joey Flecher	Dennis Martinsen	Todd Tanis
Tammy G.	Julie Belle Meares	Ralph Touch
Joe Galantino	Barry, Sharon Miller	Amy Turko
Michelle Galantino	Elaine O. Miller	Christine VanDoorn
Sandra George	Geoff Miller	Paul Vasko
Lucy Ginsiorsky	Shannon Morris	Joseph Wawrzak
Ken Gorski	Nikolette Nolte	Bonnie Wessner
		Colleen Wolff

Contact office to update list: [secretary@stmaryskutztown.com](mailto:secretary@stmaryskutztown.com)

### Please Pray for all those serving our nation

Keenan Albright	Charles Douglass	Nick Marakovits
Kyle Albright	Joseph Douglass	Melissa Marks
Michael Barron	Keith Essig	Laura Miller
Andrew Barthol	Ryan Flanagan	Spencer Morris
Frank M. Bieda	Kale Follweiler	Heather
John Boyer	Michael Allen Haak	O'Donnell
Matthew Boyer	Diane Henry	Menaka Nayyar &
Jonathan Cardé	Cmdr. Jason Hoch	Anthony Pirnot
Eric Cunningham	Joshua Joseph	Jake Schmeck
Timothy DeVall	Dan King	Phillip Talarico
Anthony DiPietro	James Knight	Steve Ziegler

Contact office to update list: [secretary@stmaryskutztown.com](mailto:secretary@stmaryskutztown.com)

### EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Sun 08.18 20<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME  
Special Diocesan 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection – National Shrine of Immaculate Conception, in Washington—Free Will Offering
- Mon 08.19 Baptism Prep. workshop, 7p
- Tue 08.20 Faith Sharing, 10a
- Wed 08.21 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 7-8p
- Thu 08.22 Liturgy committee meeting, 8:45a  
Music ministry, 7p
- Sat 08.24 Pray the Rosary, 4p  
Fr. N. R. Brelisnky celebrant 4:30p Mass  
2<sup>nd</sup> Collection – Parish Partnership

### EVENTS NEXT WEEK

- Sun 08.25 21<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME  
Fr. N. R. Brelisnky celebrant at Masses  
2<sup>nd</sup> Collection-Parish Partnership
- Tue 08.27 Agapè Faith Sharing, 11a
- Wed 08.28 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 7-8p
- Thu 08.29 O.C.I.A. Info Nite, 7p
- Sat 08.31 Pray the Rosary, 4p  
2<sup>nd</sup> Collection – Missionary Co Op

**EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINE: Submit items for Sept 01 by Aug 21.** *Submit full-page items two full weeks in advance.*

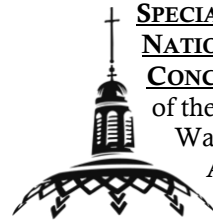
**PARISH MEMBERSHIP:** Welcome! Please register for parish membership. Call 610-683-7443 for an appointment and find out about all the parish has to offer! *Inform us if moving.*

### RELIGIOUS EDUC. REGISTRATION now open!

Classes begin Sept. 15.

To get started visit:

[www.stmaryskutztown.com/prep-at-st-marys/register now!](http://www.stmaryskutztown.com/prep-at-st-marys/register-now!)



**SPECIAL DIOCESAN COLLECTION-NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION:** At the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the First Mass offered at the Shrine in Washington, D.C., the Diocese of Allentown, and nationwide dioceses, will take a ‘no envelope’, cash collection August 17/18, part of a larger endeavor to support Shrine Infrastructure Renewal.

**THE BASILICA**  
of the NATIONAL SHRINE  
of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

**CONSIDER A CHANGE FOR YOUR CHILD’S EDUC.** HGA Regional School registration is open for 2024-2025, PreK thru 8<sup>th</sup> Grade (*space limited, esp. PreK, 1 & 6*). Learn more, email Head of School Kelly Precht! [Kelpre@hgaschool.org](mailto:Kelpre@hgaschool.org)

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**St. Mary’s Church picnic  
12:30-4p Sunday Sept. 15.**



**THE NEXT PARISH DIRECTORY:** For many years, St. Mary’s has published a parish directory every five years or so. This has been a great way for parishioners to stay connected. To keep this tradition alive, we seek a group of people to help create the next directory. Lifetouch went out of business during the pandemic while working on our 2020 directory, but there are other companies now available.

The directory team will work with a photo directory company to organize photo sessions and content. Fr. John will assist the team by suggesting potential companies and giving input on the directory content. We aim to start in early fall with a release hoped for 2025. As always, extra hands make for lighter work! We seek a small team, including a chair or co-chairs. If interested, please email Fr. John: [pastor@stmaryskutztown.com](mailto:pastor@stmaryskutztown.com) and he will gather a team, and plan a meeting.



**WELCOME BACK!** On the weekend of August 23-25 Father John will be in Minnesota for a conference of diocesan vocation directors. Newly-ordained Fr. N. Romero Brelinsky will celebrate Masses that weekend.

**SCRIPTURE REFLECTION- FR. JOHN MARIA** In our Gospel from John chapter 6, we find the most forceful words in all of Sacred Scripture about the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Jesus Himself makes the connection: He is the Bread of Life, and the bread that He will give is His flesh for the life of the world.

Followers present found this hard to believe, and they said as much. If Jesus were trying to use a mere metaphor to convey His manner of Presence, this would have been the perfect opportunity to say “Just kidding guys! It’s just a symbol!” But of course, He did not say that. Quite the contrary, He was persistent, even provocative: His flesh is true food and His blood is true drink.

The purpose of this gift is for this life, and it prepares us for eternal life.

Jesus said that the one who eats His flesh remains in Him and He in them. He uses this term elsewhere in John 15, that a branch must remain connected to Him, the Vine, who gives life.

The manna was a heavenly gift to Moses in the days of wandering, but the Bread of Life is something – SOMEONE – far greater. He is our sustenance for our journey to eternal life, and the very source of our eternal life.

How can we possibly respond? Prepare our souls to receive Him worthily. Prepare our bodies to receive Him with the greatest of humility and reverence.

May the heart of Jesus, in the Most Blessed Sacrament, be praised, adored, and loved with grateful affection, at every moment, in all the tabernacles of the world, even to the end of time. Amen!

**THE LORD CALLS EVERY SOUL TO KNOW HIS LOVE AND MERCY.** Each of us is called to strive to know Him in the fullness of Truth; not settle for partial truths, passing fads or



Come  
Follow  
Me

imitations that won't satisfy our heart's longing. **He founded His Church** upon the Rock of Peter to teach with His authority. He sent the apostles forth to baptize in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. He entrusted these truths and graces

to the Catholic Church.

**Do you have a friend or loved one who is open to hearing this call of Christ, and to being received into the Catholic Church? Might YOU be that someone who's been a friend of St. Mary's parish, but have hesitated to take the step toward becoming Catholic?**

**Jesus is still calling!** Weekly meetings begin in Sept. There is no pressure or obligation to commit immediately.

The **Order of Christian Initiation for Adults (OCIA)** is a prayer and study journey, culminating in union with Christ at Easter 2025.

**For more info, no need to wait 'til Sept!** Attend an **OCIA EARLY BIRD Session 7pm, Thursday Aug. 29, Rm. 117/122 in the Rel. Ed. Center.** Contact Fr. John Maria: 610-683-7443. We'd love for you to join us!

**DO YOU HAVE A FEW HOURS** to spare to make pierogies (for the Nov. 2 Holiday Bazaar) the Sept. Mondays after Labor Day? Help is needed for a few shifts, and everyone is done by 2p. Haven't helped before?? Friends will 'catch you up', lunch provided. Make new friends! Mary Alkons-610-683-5443



**LADIES** The annual Holiday Bazaar, Nov 02, is an excellent opportunity for parishioners to showcase their talents. Handcrafted items - made from fabric, wood, paper, yarn, etc. - will be accepted for the table. Small items, using the materials you may already have in your stash, are a wonderful addition to the Ladies Auxiliary craft table. Bring items to the Religious Ed Center the week before the bazaar. All proceeds benefit the Ladies Auxiliary/St. Mary's Church. Questions? Please contact Frances Larash: 610-683-3675



**Holiday Bazaar Cookies:** Rolled, decorated cookies are very popular at the Holiday Bazaar. Here's an easy recipe. **Donate cookie dough to REC in time for baking 12n-3p Tuesdays Sept 03—Oct 08.** Call Carm 610-683-5931 or Valetta: 610-926-3910.

ABC Cookies



5 c flour      3 eggs      1 tsp cream of tartar  
2 c sugar      1 tsp baking soda      ½ tsp vanilla  
                         ¾ lb. melted butter

Mix all ingredients together and divide into 3 patties. Wrap in waxed paper and chill overnight. Roll out and cut into shapes. Decorate & bake, 350° for 8-10 minutes.

**HGA REGIONAL SCHOOL DINE OUT EVENT:** 3-9p, Aug 28 at Margherita's Pizza, 3600 Kutztown Rd, Reading, 19605. Mention HGARS and your purchase supports the school!

**TRAVELING THIS SUMMER?** Visit [www.MassTimes.org](http://www.MassTimes.org) for nationwide Mass times/locations. Free lookups.



**BETHLEHEM CATHOLIC GOLF OUTING:** Sept 06, Whitetail Golf Club. \$130 pp includes green fees, snacks, soda, catered lunch & mulligans, pot-of-gold registration, & raffle tickets. **\*\*Register by Aug. 23.\*\*** Benefits BCHS athletic dept. [rdowney@becahi.org](mailto:rdowney@becahi.org) for more info/sponsorships.

**MASS-OUR LADY OF KNOCK:** Commemorative Mass, 4:30p, Aug. 24, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Whitehall. The Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians (LAOL) is open to Catholics of Irish descent, by birth or marriage. Embrace friendship, unity and charity. *Donate elementary school supplies for Diocesan schools.* Learn more: [lehighballeyLAOHprez@gmail.com](mailto:lehighballeyLAOHprez@gmail.com)

**MASS WITH BISHOP SCHLERT-MEMORIAL OF ST. MONICA:** 6p, Aug. 27, St. Theresa Church, 1408 Easton Rd, Hellertown. Join as we pray for the return to the Church of our fallen-away loved ones. Buffet dinner in Friendship Hall follows, dinner tkts \$7 per person. RSVP: [stmonicaministry27@gmail.com](mailto:stmonicaministry27@gmail.com)

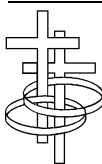
**HISPANIC MEN'S CONFERENCE (in Spanish)** We invite the entire community of Hispanic men to the Men's Conference taking place **7a-3p, Sept. 7, at St Mary's Parish in Hamburg.** *This conference will be entirely in Spanish.* Bishop Schlert will celebrate the 8a Mass. Presenters: Fr. Eder Estrada, Fr. Eduardo Rodriguez and Fr. Angel Garcia. Register: [allentowndiocese.flocknote.com/signup/169404](http://allentowndiocese.flocknote.com/signup/169404) Info: Freddy Morales, [freddymorales1533@yahoo.com](mailto:freddymorales1533@yahoo.com), Felix Pereira, [borinken.fp@gmail.com](mailto:borinken.fp@gmail.com).

**DAILY MASSES WITH BISHOP SCHLERT, BECAUSE WE ARE CATHOLIC:** All are invited to celebrate with the Bishop: Sept. 12, 8:00a - Holy Guardian Angels, Reading

**SAVE THE DATE – YOUR LIFE RETREAT** Malvern Retreat House. For men (**Sept 06-08**) and women (**Sept. 13-15**) a period of refreshment, support, and reassurance. Learn and focus on the gift of your life—reflect, and improve personal communion with the Lord. Info: Anthony Scarselletti, [OLPH.ascarselletti@gmail.com](mailto:OLPH.ascarselletti@gmail.com) or 610-393-4671

**CASINO NIGHT:** 6-10p, Sept. 13 at Sts. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Banquet Hall, Wyomissing. **Proceeds benefit Mary's Shelter.** Tickets: \$80pp/\$150 couples; Must be 21 and older. Sponsorships available. Info/Tickets: 610-603-8010 or [www.marysshelter.org/casino](http://www.marysshelter.org/casino)

**DIOCESAN ANNIVERSARY MASS:** 3p, Sunday Sept 22. Doors open 2p. Each year the Diocese of Allentown offers a Mass for married couples celebrating a milestone anniversary at the cathedral. Couples are invited to renew their vows and thank God for the gift of the Sacrament of Marriage. Info: [rtulloch@allentowndiocese.org](mailto:rtulloch@allentowndiocese.org) and RSVP: [www.allentowndiocese.org/anniversarymass](http://www.allentowndiocese.org/anniversarymass)



*We are a welcoming community called to deepen and share our faith*

### **PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY WITH BISHOP SCHLERT:**

Reservations are open for the JUBILEE YEAR PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY with Bishop Schlert & Fr. Hoffa: **Tue. March 25, 2025-Sat. April 3, 2025.** The first Diocese of Allentown International Pilgrimage will “Follow the Footsteps of Saints Peter and Paul” through Florence, Assisi, and Rome. Sign up: Fr. Allen Hoffa [ahoffa@allentowndioocese.org](mailto:ahoffa@allentowndioocese.org) or 610-921-2729 x 2205.

### **Daily Marriage Tip**

St. Jane Frances de Chantal was a wife and mother who was widowed at age 28. Pray, for those who have lost a spouse, and look for a concrete way to support them. [foryourmarriage.org](http://foryourmarriage.org)

**AUGUST IS MAKE-AWILL MONTH.** Do you have a bank account? Investments or digital assets? A pet? Are you a parent? Own your own home? A Business? Are you on social media? If yes to any of these, a will is essential.

FreeWill, made available for free by the Diocese of Allentown, is a confidential, online estate planning tool to create or update your legally-binding will, in 20 minutes! Visit: [www.freewill.com/allentowndioocese](http://www.freewill.com/allentowndioocese)

**STRUGGLING WITH SEXUAL ADDICTION?** Help is available.

There is now a Sexaholics Anonymous Group in central Berks County. Learn more or speak with a member of the Lumen Christi Commission (LCC), the diocesan response to issue of pornography, contact LCC Commission Chair Fr. Allen Hoffa at [adlumenchristi@allentowndioocese.org](mailto:adlumenchristi@allentowndioocese.org) 610-921-2729 ext. 2205 or All inquires are confidential.

**Word of Life:** “God’s love—individual, unchanging, real—is the true source of our worth, identity, and dignity. It really is not a question of who we are, but rather *whose* we are. Because his love will never change, nothing can reduce our God-given dignity, and nothing can diminish the immeasurable worth of our lives.” ~ USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities: “How to Build a Culture of Life”

### **KNOW THE FACTS - VOTER REGISTRATION IN PA:**

Are you registered to vote? If not, here’s how. Check with your county voter registration office. The last day to register is usually a month before the election. Individuals applying to register to vote must be:

- ✓ **a citizen of the United States** for at least one month before the next primary, special, municipal, or general election.
- ✓ **a resident of Pennsylvania** and the election district in which the individual desires to register and vote for at least 30 days before the next primary, special, municipal, or general election.
- ✓ **at least 18 years of age** on or before the day of the next primary, special, municipal, or general election.

**Details about voting in PA:** [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com)

### **EXPLORE DIOCESAN EMPLOYMENT OPENINGS:**

[www.allentowndioocese.org/about/employment](http://www.allentowndioocese.org/about/employment)

**HELP COMMUNITY NEWCOMERS**-Mother Veronica Resource Center Adult Ed., Reading, seeks instructors:

- Basic and Intermediate computer classes-daytime
- English as a Second Language (ESL)-day or evening
- Citizenship Preparation-day or evening.
- Substitute instructors welcome

Sr Cara: 484-706-3570 [mveronicacenter@gmail.com](mailto:mveronicacenter@gmail.com)

### **REFLECTION... by Rev. Leonard N. Peterson**

Algebra class was the origin of real high school stress for me. At the time I wouldn’t have called it that. It had another identifying label not suitable for presentation here. All I remember was that a whole bunch of numbers and letters on the left somehow equaled the same pile on the right. The name of the item was “equation.”

Our Lord never had to study algebra as far as the Bible is concerned. Nor should we be. Yet there are examples aplenty of His non-mathematical “equations.” He called Himself “the Good Shepherd” on one occasion. “The Son of Man” several times. So too for our purpose today “The Bread of Life.”

John chapter six expands on that last title by letting us hear Jesus say that the unleavened bread and the cup of wine in front of Him on the table at the Last Supper through His saying so became equated (there’s that word again) with His very flesh and blood. The better expression is that those two elements were transformed into His Body and Blood.

Our physical senses don’t detect any change. The bread looks, acts and tastes like bread on the outside, but it is no longer bread, but His Body. “Corpus Christi.” Same for the wine as our senses yield. But at the words of consecration, pronounced in our time by the ordained priest, as God’s representative, turn it into His Blood.

In another Gospel section, Jesus declares that the eating and drinking of His Body and Blood is our guarantee of living forever. That is, unless we forfeit the guarantee by unrepentant sin. That’s when we really can appreciate Sacrament of Penance as another gift from our loving God.

One of the most intriguing new advocates for loving the Holy Eucharist is a young man named Carlo Acutis. Carlo was born in England and was raised in Italy. He died when he was only 15 from leukemia. He was up until then a normal happy boy, liked by his many friends; good at playing soccer but especially skilled with a computer. From an early age he was attracted by the Eucharistic Lord and went to daily Mass even converting his own mom to the faith.

He designed a web page on which he posted information on all the Eucharistic miracles that he could. A traveling exposition of these has traveled the world. He matched his devotion with service to the poor. After he died his body was unearthed intact for what was to be burial in Assisi. So now you can view the body enclosed in glass, with Carlo dressed in a sports jacket and sneakers. The first millennial soon to be canonized. What an inspiration! A young disciple telling us that holiness is so possible in our ordinary lives. Google his name for more details.

In the meantime, remember that “the world will not be convinced of your faith by the sourness of your face.”

God love you and give you his peace.