

The Concept

Newsletter of Immaculate Conception Parish

A Letter From Our Pastor

In this Issue

2

Bringing Glory to the
Lord's Sacred Name
The Holy Name Society

3

Preaching the Gospel
Via New Technologies

4

Immaculate Conception
School Celebrates
Catholic Schools Week

6

Lake Life Teen Core
Team
*Dedicated Adults
Answering the Call to Service*

7

St. Mark
Spreading Christ's Message

8

2010 Holy Week Schedule

37932 Euclid Avenue
Rectory and Offices:
37935 Wright Street
Willoughby, OH 44094-5899
Phone 440-942-4500
www.immaculate.net

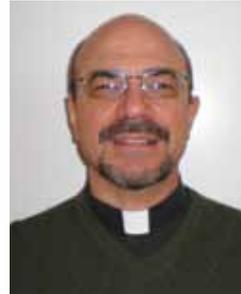
Celebrating the Resurrection

Dear Parishioners,

There is a small town in the hills of Tennessee that has just one little Christian church. On Easter Sunday, the members of the church do something that perhaps no other Christian church does.

They have a parade. The parade begins at the church and ends at the cemetery. What a great public manifestation of faith in the Resurrection of Jesus! What a wonderful way to celebrate the fact that all Christians have died with Christ so that they can rise with Him to new life. What a consoling way to remember their loved ones who have gone before them.

As I write this column, I have just come from the funeral Mass and burial of Julie Fekete. Julie had five bishops and two dozen priests on the altar at her funeral. The final procession was a Catholic parade if there ever was one. Who was Julie Fekete? Julie was the secretary of our diocesan mission office for the past 49 years. She began working for the Diocese of Cleveland when she was just 20 years old. She never married, probably because she was married to her job. She loved working for the mission office. Julie was a great help to me and all of the other missionaries from our diocese who served on



our mission team in El Salvador. She had a smile and a kind word for everyone who came through the office. She will be missed.

Our celebration of Easter is a time to thank God for the gift of His Son, Jesus. We remember the wonderful people we have known in our lives, people like Julie Fekete, who have loved much through a life of dedication and service to others. We remember our loved ones who have died "in the sure and certain hope of the Resurrection." Yes, Easter can be a very consoling time for those who mourn.

As Catholics from small towns and large cities, we will gather to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus. We celebrate not with a parade, but rather by taking part in a sacrificial meal. We gather to celebrate His death and Resurrection. It is as if we are present at Calvary and the empty tomb at every Mass. We give thanks for all that He gives us, and pray that we can love others as He has loved us. He is risen, Alleluia!

In Christ,
Reverend Michael Troha
Fr. Troha

The Concept

Bringing Glory to the Lord's Sacred Name *The Holy Name Society*

Why is it wrong to scream “Oh my God” at the top of our lungs in the midst of a stressful situation? It seems like such a simple, and often instinctive, exclamation. Yet, the Lord Himself told us not to take His name in vain. The reason for this is that the Lord's name is a sacred one. He is, after all, the one God, the one to whom every human being owes his or her existence. Therefore, His name is to be honored, not profaned.

The Holy Name Society, an international organization of Catholic men, recognizes how easy it has become for all of us to casually use the name of the Lord in vain, and it is focused on spreading a greater devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus. In that same spirit, its members strive to promote holy living in all areas of life. For centuries, thousands of men have pooled their efforts and made a great difference throughout the world through this ministry.

“It's a wonderful ministry,” says Jack Petersen, the current president of Immaculate Conception's chapter of the Holy Name Society.

Jack joined the Holy Name Society a number of years ago, and he feels privileged to have joined with his fellow parishioners, gaining friendships and promoting holiness. They are a dedicated group of men who enjoy their numerous activities.

On the second Sunday of every month, the men join one another at 8 a.m. Mass, where they sit in a reserved section near St. Joseph's statue. On the Monday following the monthly “Holy Name Mass,” the men meet together in the school library. They discuss the numerous upcoming activities and offer suggestions for the group's future. Following each meeting, the men enjoy a social hour with refreshments.

In addition to its monthly meetings, the Holy Name Society is highly active in pro-life causes. A number of its members participate in the March for Life in Washington, D.C. every year. The group also purchases the crib in which our parish collects baby items each year for local charities.



The society also promotes and supports vocations to the priesthood and religious life, sponsoring visits to seminaries and assisting in the running of a raffle that raises money for retired religious.

Jack points out that the members of the Holy Name Society are committed to service, sharing of their time and talents with numerous ministries at Immaculate Conception.

“Our men are really hard workers,” he says. “They want to ensure that our parish is successful in living as Christian disciples. They want to do their part.”

Indeed, their dedication to the Holy Name of Jesus has grown into a dedication to promoting holy living all around.

Please join them! Every man 18 and over is invited and encouraged to be an active member of the Holy Name Society. If you are interested, please contact Jack Petersen at 440-951-2045.

Preaching the Gospel Via New Technologies

For an institution steeped in history and age-old traditions, the Church's new message on technology may seem surprising. Nevertheless, Pope Benedict XVI is encouraging priests around the world to use new technology to promote the message and ministry of Christ.

"Priests stand at the threshold of a new era: as new technologies create deeper forms of relationships across greater distances, they are called to respond pastorally by putting the media ever more effectively at the service of the Word," said his Holiness in a message released Jan. 23.

The Pope's message, which was a precursor to this year's World Communications Day, illustrates the importance of communicating the Word of God in increasingly relevant and far-reaching ways. Although Jesus preached and healed the people of Israel thousands of years ago, His message is just as applicable today as it was for the first Christians. Using modern methods of communication to transmit this message will increase the influence of Christ's teachings and allow a broader range of individuals to receive His Word.

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved," said Pope Benedict XVI, quoting St. Paul's letter to the Romans. "But how can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach? And how can people preach unless they are sent? Responding adequately to this challenge amid today's cultural shifts, to which young people are especially sensitive, necessarily involves using new communications technologies."

The Pope goes on to remind priests of their place in the midst of these new technological advances: "Using new communication technologies, priests can introduce people to the life of the Church and help our contemporaries to discover the face of Christ. They will best

achieve this aim if they learn, from the time of their formation, how to use these technologies in a competent and appropriate way, shaped by sound theological insights and reflecting a strong priestly spirituality grounded in constant dialogue with the Lord."



Priests who respond to the Holy Father's urgings will likely be found preaching not only from the pulpit, but also on social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace, Twitter, and perhaps Internet forums and chat rooms. In the near future, pastors are as likely to be found carrying a Bible as they are toting an iPad in their briefcase.

The Pope's words also apply to our mission as disciples and stewards of God's Word. At its core, stewardship refers to the wise and just management of anything that is placed under our care. For example, God gave us the Earth to cultivate and use for our own enrichment. The same can be said about new technologies. To use them for the purpose of communicating the message of Jesus is not only an option, but our responsibility.

And just as the Earth can be abused, so can technology. In his message, the Pope gives this warning: "Priests present in the world of digital communications should be less notable for their media savvy than for their priestly heart, their closeness to Christ. This will not only enliven their pastoral outreach, but also will give a 'soul' to the fabric of communications that makes up the 'Web.'"

Rather than lament the growing number of people who no longer acknowledge the existence and saving power of God, let's do something about it. Young people, especially, must be met at their level. By using modern technology to communicate the Gospel, more and more people are bound to come to know the joys of a life centered on Christ.

The Concept

Immaculate Conception School C



This year, Catholic Schools Week was a bittersweet celebration at Immaculate Conception School. Feelings of nostalgia, and even some sadness, permeated the school during the week of Jan. 31-Feb.6, as we celebrated our last Catholic Schools Week at Immaculate Conception School.

"It was an emotional time," Principal Kathy Hrutkay says.

Yet the fact that this would be our last Catholic Schools Week celebration as a school community did not minimize the excitement and celebratory mood that always engulfs our students, parents, faculty and staff during Catholic Schools Week. The week began, as it always does at IC School, with a prayer service.

"That is an Immaculate Conception tradition," Kathy explains. "We always start the week off in a spirit

of prayer, recognizing that the purpose of the week is to celebrate our catholicity."

On Tuesday, the school community welcomed the Madcap Production Company, which put on a large-scale puppet show, performing *Tales of the Silk Road*.

"It was a play about an ancient road in China, and the kids really enjoyed it," Kathy says.

Wednesday featured two of Immaculate Conception's most treasured Catholic Schools Week traditions – Mass and the talent show. This year's talent show was particularly captivating, as third-grade teacher Marlene Waller, who will be retiring after this year, preformed a "cha-cha, jive-type routine" with her ballroom dancing partner.

"The kids were thrilled," Kathy says. And even the *News-Herald* came to capture it. It was a great way to cap off our Talent Show here at Immaculate Conception.

Celebrates Catholic Schools Week



On Thursday, the students enjoyed another annual Catholic Schools Week event – Jammin’ for Jesus. That day, every homeroom kicked off its day to the tunes of Christian rock ‘n’ roll, and the students were encouraged to sing, dance, and even make hand motions to the music. It was a great time!

Friday was what Kathy calls “a rest day.” Given all of the activities that had taken place throughout the course of the week, the teachers and students both needed a well-deserved break, so they spent Friday in a very low-key manner.

But by Sunday, the buzz of activity had picked up once again! Parents, teachers, students, alumni, and visitors gathered for our last Open House.

“We had a lot of alumni,” Kathy says. “It was especially touching, because so many people who

graduated eighth grade in the ‘50s and ‘60s came back to see their elementary school. It was so nice to see that they were impacted by Immaculate Conception to the point that, so many years later, they wanted to come visit.”

All-in-all, the entire week was a great time of celebration. And as we look toward the future and Mater Dei School, Kathy would like to extend her sincere gratitude to everyone who has made Immaculate Conception School what it is today.

“I thank you for supporting us. Thank you for sending your children here. I thank the teachers for being here and being such an integral part of the Immaculate Conception family. And I thank the students for the wonderful people they are.”

The Concept

Lake Life Teen Core Team

Dedicated Adults Answering the Call to Service

For parishioner Greg Schmidt, passing on our Faith to future generations is one of our primary responsibilities as Catholics.

“Every year I’m involved in the youth ministry makes it crystal clear for me that every generation is responsible for our Faith being passed to the next generation,” says Greg. “We help teens grow in their faith, they then become adults who help others. And really, this is how, 2,000 years after Christ, we still have our Church.”

At Immaculate Conception, we work towards fulfilling this responsibility through the Lake Life Teen ministry. Following the basic formula of gathering each Sunday evening for Mass, then meeting afterwards for an evening of faith sharing and fellowship, the Lake Life Teen ministry teaches high school teens at Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Mount Carmel the importance of living a Christ-centered life. It’s a vibrant ministry that is possible thanks in large part to a backbone of dedicated adult Core Team Members who answer the call to serve our youth.

Greg, who helped implement this ministry almost three years ago, explains that the Core Team is comprised of adults who work, listen, and pray with teens by creating a spiritual atmosphere and open lines of communication.

“Life Teen is a relational ministry, so it’s important to have adults who are willing to share and teach their faith,” explains Greg. “And since the make-up of a team should be well-rounded, it’s important to have Core Members representing a variety of ages, backgrounds and professions.”



Greg, who has been involved in previous youth ministry groups in other parishes, believes that the success of Lake Life Teen is due to the fact that the parish took almost seven months to develop the Core Team before officially starting the program.

“The powerful aspect about a program like this is the continuity,” he explains. “We build a Core Team of trained parishioners who are dedicated to the parish and to the youth teen ministry. In other words, the ministry is not run not by a single individual, but by parishioners who have long-term commitments to their parish.”

And commitment is an important aspect of being a Core Member. There is a lot that happens behind the scenes in organizing the Life Teen Mass, preparing the catechetical lessons for Life Nights, and planning fun activities such as lock-ins, summer rafting trips, and spring and fall retreats. Greg also points out that a strong commitment to being involved also means that the teens have more opportunities to bond with members of the Core Team.

The ministry is grounded in the Eucharist, so the adults on the Core Team are not only involved in their Catholic Faith, but also intent on exploring a deeper spirituality. They are also keenly aware that they are evangelizing young adults by example.

The wonderful thing about spending time with teens is that the learning

goes both ways. Teens often remind us of some basic lessons in life, such as the importance of being yourself and the value of actively listening to what others have to say.

“I remember a priest in college who said that young adults don’t care what you have to say until they know how much you care,” says Greg. “In addition, it is true that if you take the time to listen to teens, they will take the time to listen to you.”

Finally, Greg says that the Life Teen ministry would not be where it is today without the encouragement and support of Fr. Troha, Fr. Turner, and youth coordinator Teresa Szary.

“Our parish is truly blessed,” he says.

As Christian stewards, we are often called to a discipleship that impacts faith communities in a positive way, and the Core Team is a perfect example of this, as its members reach out to our young adults at a time when they need it most: during their teen years. Thanks to all the Core Team adults for their dedication, service and commitment in helping make Lake Life Teen such an important part of our parish.

Members of the Core Team

Fr. Andy Turner
Teresa Szary, youth coordinator
Greg & Chrissy Schmidt
Jeff & Jen Boehmer
Zach Caro
Jeff & Maria Fuller
Keith Grankauskas
Kevin & Lynne Hoopingarner
Jen Kapeluch
Katie Klemencic
Mikalella Miller
Cindy Patt
Nick & Ann Marie Raddell
Michelle Weber

St. Mark

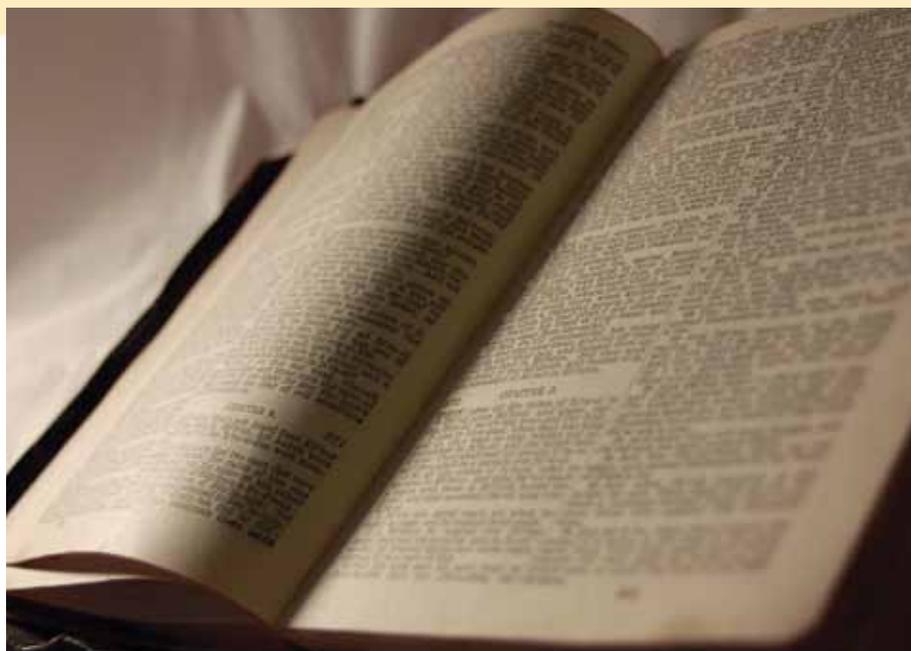
Spreading Christ's Message

On April 25, Catholics celebrate the feast of St. Mark, whose Gospel we hear each Sunday throughout this liturgical year.

The shortest and oldest of the gospels, Mark draws from oral tradition and a document named *Q*, which contains many of Christ's sayings. Likely written 25-30 years after the Ascension, Mark's Gospel serves as a source for those of Matthew and Luke. Setting this Gospel apart from the others, women play an integral role in Mark's Gospel, often understanding with clarity aspects of Christ's message that the apostles had difficulty comprehending.

Furthermore, Mark portrays Christ's persecution as a result of His radical challenge to established orders of religion, economy, and politics.

While the history of Mark's Gospel is fairly accessible, many legends have arisen around him that cause difficulty when attempting to explore the saint's historical persona. Some associate Mark with Simon Peter after the Ascension, and others identify Mark as the young man who ran naked from the Garden of Gethsemane when Christ was arrested. Despite attempts to place Mark in Christ's physical proximity,



the most significant depictions recall his activity as a disciple in the early Church. Some scholars say that Mark was a companion of Peter's and was the first Bishop of Alexandria, thus the first pope of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria. Mark is also said to be "John Mark" of the Acts of the Apostles, a cousin of Barnabas who accompanied Paul on his journeys. However, most do agree on Mark's martyrdom. Tradition has it that he was dragged through the city streets due to his attempts to turn Alexandrians away from Egyptian gods.

Though Mark's extraordinary achievements may not seem to align with the lives of the ordinary faithful, his story reminds all Christians of their responsibility to spread the Gospel message. Each believer is summoned to live the life of radical mission, one that, like Christ's in Mark's Gospel, defies the status quo in search of greater good and justice. By following Mark's example, Catholics are empowered to continue their presence as a powerful political and social force, always attempting to mirror the Kingdom of God on Earth.

Immaculate Conception

Catholic Church

37935 Wright Street
Willoughby, OH 44094-5899

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #61
Willoughby, Ohio

2010 Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday

March 28

8 a.m., 10 a.m., and 12 noon Masses
2 p.m. Lenten Penance Service

Monday

March 29

7:45 a.m. Mass in the rectory chapel

Tuesday

March 30

7:45 a.m. Mass in the rectory chapel

Wednesday

March 31

8:30 a.m. Mass
7 p.m. Tenebrae Service

Holy Thursday

April 1

7:30 p.m. Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday

April 2

12:30 p.m. Stations of the Cross
3 p.m. Celebration of the Lord's Passion
7 p.m. Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday

April 3

12 noon Blessing of Easter Food
9 p.m. Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday

April 4

8 a.m., 10 a.m. and 12 noon