

The Concept

Newsletter of Immaculate Conception Parish

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

Growing through Teaching *Immaculate Conception's Catechists*

Most experts in educational psychology agree that we best keep information in long-term memory when we teach it to others. Ask any of Immaculate Conception's catechists, and they'll probably agree. Whether they teach PSR or are on the RCIA team, our catechists are responsible for the instruction and formation of those learning about the Faith, and their own knowledge grows in the process of teaching.

This year, our RCIA team welcomed Adam Marcia, Kristina Hildebrandt and Zoe Whetstone into the Catholic Church on Holy Saturday.

"It's a learning experience as well as a teaching experience," says Diana Lipfird, Pastoral Associate and Coordinator for RCIA. "It strengthens my faith every time we have a class; you see their faith grow and your faith grows, as well."

Greg Carlson also serves as a catechist for RCIA, and he brings a unique perspective to the teaching role. Four years ago, he was on the other side of the table, learning about the Faith as a RCIA candidate. He was raised as an Evangelical, and was very active in his faith. As he read and studied more about his faith, he began to question some things.

"[The Catholic Faith] seemed perfect and fuller and richer," Greg says of his thought process four years ago. "After RCIA was finished, I was asked to be a part of the team. I've been thankful for the opportunity."

Greg has worked with the RCIA program ever since, and continues to read, study, and learn about his Faith. He says being a catechist increases his enthusiasm and reaffirms his decision to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church.



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The Concept

Understanding the New Roman Missal *The Introductory Rites*

Last month in the parish newsletter, we introduced the Third Edition of the *Missale Romanum* (Roman Missal) that will be implemented in United States parishes starting on Nov. 27, 2011. In that introduction, we discussed the history of the English-language Roman Missal since Vatican II, as well as the reasons for the new translations and the work that has been done to finalize them over the last 10 years. This month, we will briefly touch upon some of the major changes that Catholics can expect during the introductory portion of our daily and weekly liturgical celebrations.

Although the words that we say at Mass have undergone translation, the order of the Mass will not change. The Liturgy will be broken up into four parts: Introductory Rites, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist, and Concluding Rites. This article will highlight some of the notable revisions to the Introductory Rites.

After the opening hymn or antiphon, the first words that we are used to hearing at Mass are the priest leading us in making the Sign of the Cross, to which we respond “Amen.” The priest then has several formulas from which he can choose to greet the people, the most familiar of which is “The Lord be with you.” These words will not change, but our response to them will. Instead of saying “And also with you,” as we have done in the past, we will now respond, “And with your spirit.”

This revised response more closely corresponds to the one that currently exists in many other languages, and is directly inspired by Sacred Scripture. Moreover, as Fr. Paul Turner points out in *Understanding the Revised Mass Texts*, it is a richer response that more fully places us in the presence of Christ. “The purpose of this greeting is not just to say, *Hello* or *Good morning*. It alerts participants that they are entering a sacramental realm and reminds them of their responsibilities during this time we will spend at prayer” (Turner 8).

Another small, but notable, change that may initially cause some confusion will be a new translation of the Confiteor during Penitential Act. The Confiteor is the communal prayer that begins “I confess to almighty God, and to you my brothers and sisters...” Instead of saying “that I have sinned through my own fault” as we did in the previous translation, we will now use the phrase “that I have greatly sinned.” Furthermore, a new stanza will be added between the words “in what I have done and in what I have failed to do” and “I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin.” The assembly will now pray the following, according to the official *Order of the Mass*:

*in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,
(And, striking their breast, they say:)
through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;
(Then they continue:)
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,*

At first glance, this new translation of the Confiteor appears to encourage us to offer a much more heartfelt repentance for our sins, which must be a lot more serious than they were during past liturgical celebrations, right? Not necessarily. According to Fr. Turner, “The guiding principle of the translation is a closer adherence to the words in Latin—not a sharper critique of our virtue. The new translation does have us express more grandly the seriousness of our sin and the sincerity of our contrition. It offers a humbler way to collect ourselves before stepping any further into prayer” (Turner 11).

Next month, we will explore some of the changes to the Liturgy of the Word in the new translation of the Roman Missal. In the meantime, please visit the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Web site at www.usccb.org/romanmissal for more information and resources regarding the Third Edition of the *Missale Romanum*.

A Letter from Our Pastor

Embrace the Holy Spirit

Dear Parishioners,

You've all heard homilies about Pentecost, which comes on June 12 this year. Pentecost was the day when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles while they were gathered for prayer in Jerusalem.

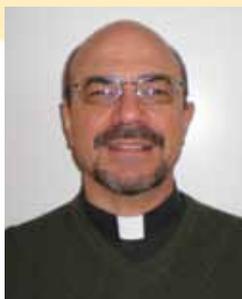
Coming 10 days after Jesus' Ascension into heaven, the descent of the Holy Spirit turned the apostles from a collection of fearful followers looking for some direction into a band of courageous witnesses ready to declare their faith in Christ to the whole world.

You've heard that Pentecost is the birthday of the Church, because that was the day when, newly filled with the Holy Spirit, St. Peter preached the first Christian sermon, inviting his hearers to turn to Jesus as their Savior and their Lord. Those who accepted the invitation were baptized and "were added" to the Church (Acts 2:41). That day marked the beginning of the Church's public mission, which continues to the present.

But the Holy Spirit's actions in the Church were not limited to the apostles in an ancient time. He remains active down to the present, guiding the pope and the bishops as they go about their work of sanctifying, teaching, and ruling in the Church. The Holy Spirit acts in the sacraments to make them effective signs of grace. We see the Holy Spirit's work in the witness of the saints, through whom He continues the work of salvation.

The Spirit, moreover, acts not only in the Church as a corporate body, but also in the lives of individual Christians. We become temples of the Holy Spirit at our baptism. Then, at Confirmation, which is our own personal Pentecost, we receive the seal of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit unites us more closely to Christ, increases the spiritual gifts we have been given, and strengthens us to spread and defend the Faith.

The point I'm trying to get across is that Pentecost is not merely a feast celebrating something that happened a long time ago. Of course, the coming of the Spirit we read about in Acts 2 took place just once. But the Holy Spirit remains active today, guiding the Church as a whole but also working in the life of each individual Christian to make us holy.



But, you say, you don't feel like the Holy Spirit is working in your life? Well, God the Father gave us free will, so we can choose whether or not we'll obey Him. And God the Holy Spirit, being united in the one Godhead with the Father and the Son, honors that freedom. He'll never force us to turn away from sin or compel us to obey God's commandments. The Spirit offers us grace. He will beckon us toward heaven, and occasionally we may feel Him nudging us along, but we always have the freedom to choose God or to reject Him.

Perhaps you've made a commitment to worship at Mass at least weekly and spend some time each day in prayer. Maybe you have promised to use some of your talents in parish ministries and service to the community. You may even have turned in a card at our last Stewardship Renewal to indicate your pledge of a portion of your treasure to be used in God's service.

I hope you've done all of these. If so, both the Holy Spirit's grace and your response were involved in your decision. And the Holy Spirit will give you the strength to fulfill your commitments.

This Pentecost, make the Gradual verse we'll sing just before the Gospel your personal prayer:

*Alleluia. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful;
and kindle in them the fire of your love. Alleluia.*

If you do, you'll find the Holy Spirit working even more strongly in your life. You'll be happier, and the world – at least your little corner of it – will be a better place.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald Michael Troha".

Fr. Troha

The Concept

Keeping the Faith Community Intact *Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist*

You see them every week at Mass: Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist. But these volunteers also serve in places that very few of us see: the homes and rooms of the homebound. And that service to those otherwise isolated from the Immaculate Conception community is essential to their ministry.

“The Extraordinary Ministers bring Christ to those who are unable to participate in the Mass,” Deacon Paul Hlabse says. “It’s a way to keep the faith community intact.”

Those who receive the Eucharist are well aware of the importance of the Extraordinary Ministers, as well.

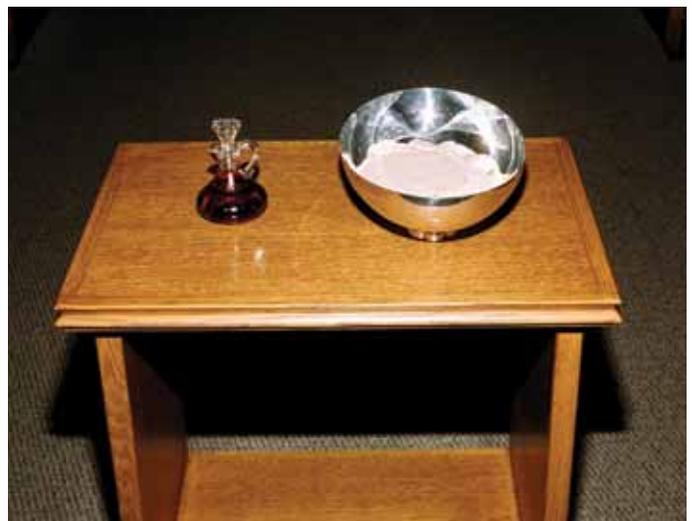
“They are just so happy, and many of them start to cry that someone has come; they’ll say that they need the Lord so badly,” says Mary Delzoppo, an Extraordinary Minister to the homebound. “It just really makes it all worth it, knowing that they won’t get to receive the Eucharist otherwise.”

Mary first volunteered to be an Extraordinary Minister after hearing about the ministry from another parishioner.

“I thought it was intriguing: to be able to share the Lord with someone else just seemed so amazing, especially for someone like myself, who grew up when laypeople didn’t touch the Host, and women weren’t allowed on the altar,” Mary says. “I thought, ‘what a wonderful gift, to reverently hold the Host and offer it to someone else.’”

Reverence for Jesus in the Eucharist is what Mary experiences every time she serves, either as an Extraordinary Minister at Mass or at a nursing home.

“I understand better the reasons for why we have so much reverence for the Host,” she says. “Being an Extraordinary Minister helps me to really acknowledge that I do believe that this truly is the Body and Blood of Our Lord. It brings Him much closer to me, and it



*“The Eucharist has become more of a
Real Presence for me.”*

- Kathy Doles

also brings home to me that this is God. So when I’m sharing the Eucharist with someone, I’m going to slowly and gently place it in his or her hands.”

But that confidence in her ministry wasn’t there when Mary first started. The good news, she says, is that everyone gets over their initial apprehensions with time.

“I was scared,” she admits. “The first time, you think that everyone’s staring at you, and you’re afraid that you’re going to trip or drop it. But you get more comfortable the more you do it.”

Another Extraordinary Minister at Immaculate Conception is Kathy Doles, who joined over 25 years ago as an extension of her other outreach ministries.

“I was helping with some of the outreach programs, and Father felt that the next step was having laypeople visit shut-ins,” Kathy recalls. “And visiting shut-ins is

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Immaculate Conception's Catechists

continued from front cover

"[Teaching RCIA] really developed my understanding of why I came into the Church," he says. "It was very natural for me and I enjoyed it from the beginning."

Reflecting on his time as a catechist, Greg says he would absolutely encourage anyone to be a part of the RCIA team, regardless of prior knowledge or experience.

"Our contributions are valuable because of where we come from – our different personalities and backgrounds," he says. "If you have the desire to teach, you can do it, and we work as a team. Seeing the growth that occurs over the nine months and the friendships...it's a privilege."

Walking alongside the current class, teaching them, and being with them as they prepare for the Sacraments of Initiation reminds Greg of his own experiences. He says the Rite of Election at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist was a "wonderful" experience. The catechumens were impressed with the sheer number of people entering the Church from our diocese this year, a visual reminder of our place within the global, universal Church.

Much like the catechumens, however, Greg always finds the Easter Vigil the most meaningful.

"It's an amazing thing, when the church goes from darkness to light," he says. "I got chills up and down my spine; it never fails to get me. [That moment] represents why we're here as a Church. If it wasn't for the Resurrection..."

Greg trails off, overcome with emotion. "The sacraments are just great," he concludes.

Many thanks to our RCIA team of Diana Lipfird, Greg Carlson, Leslie Jordan, and George Callahan for walking with our RCIA candidates and catechumens in each of their respective faith journeys.

If you or someone you know would like to become part of our Catholic Faith, please contact Diana Lipfird at the parish office at 440-942-4500.



Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist *continued from page 4*

so special – I've met so many wonderful people that I wouldn't otherwise have known. For those who come back to Mass, you have a friend for life; and for those who I've lost through death, it feels like I have a friend in heaven praying for me."

Having responsibility for something as important as Jesus Christ in the Eucharist also renews the importance and mystery of His Presence in the sacrament.

"It's strengthened my faith, and made it more real," Kathy says. "Bringing the Eucharist to others also reminds me that God isn't just something you do on Sundays. The Eucharist has become more of a Real Presence for me."

To learn more about serving as an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist, please call Deacon Paul Hlabse at 440-942-4500.



The Concept

The Precepts of the Church Third Precept

You shall receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season.

Many contemporary Catholics are amazed to learn that the Church has a rule that they must receive Holy Communion at least once a year. Most American Catholics troop down the aisle to receive the sacrament every time they attend Mass, with the idea of not receiving never entering their minds.

This is a dramatic contrast to the prevalent practice for much of the Church's history, and one common even until the mid-twentieth century. Then, you'd find many Sunday Masses packed with worshipers, but when it was time for Communion, only the priest who was celebrant would receive, plus maybe a handful of religious or a few especially devout members of the laity.

New attitudes and the Church's revised disciplinary rules are responsible for the difference. A century ago, most Catholics would not receive Communion unless they had been to confession earlier that day or the day before. They were very aware of the danger of being in a state of mortal sin and didn't want to take any chances. We had been very effective in inculcating the well-known attitude of "Catholic guilt."

In addition, the Church's law required that anyone receiving Holy Communion had to be fasting, which meant no food or drink, not even water, could be received from midnight on until after Communion. The only recognized exception was the Viaticum for the dying and sometimes the Communion of the sick. That explains why most of those intending to receive Communion attended early morning celebrations, and many Catholics made their Communion only once a year (their "Easter duty").

Modern views emphasize God's love and forgiveness, and we have relaxed rules for the Eucharistic fast, which is reduced now to one hour before Communion, with water allowed at any time. As a result, almost everyone at Mass comes forward every time except for a few people who have problematic marital situations or children who have not yet made their First Communion.



While few would want to go back to the days of rigid Communion fasts and an approach to God in which a sense of His wrath predominates, it may be healthy for our souls to remember that it is possible to fall into mortal sin, and if we do, we need to go to confession before we receive Holy Communion. Being in a state of grace is still a requirement to partake of the Eucharistic Banquet. Worshipping without receiving is sometimes a spiritually wholesome practice, and it can make us appreciate the sacrament even more. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1385) teaches, "Anyone conscious of a grave sin must receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before coming to communion."

So why is it required that we receive Holy Communion at least once a year? Because the fruits of the Eucharist are rich, and provide essential nourishment for our souls. Indeed, frequent Communion is strongly encouraged for those who are spiritually prepared.

And what are these fruits we receive when we partake of the Body and Blood of Christ? "Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ increases the communicant's union with the Lord, forgives his venial sins, and preserves him from grave sins. Since receiving this sacrament strengthens the bonds of charity between the communicant and Christ, it also reinforces the unity of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ" (*Catechism*, 1416).

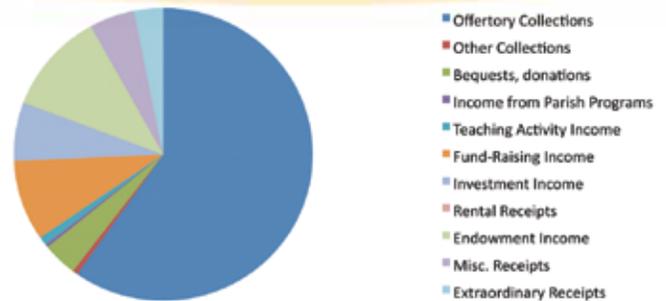
Communion, then, at least once a year, is necessary to maintain the life of the soul. The Church provides for at least this minimal nourishment with the precept that we all receive Holy Communion at Easter.

Financial Report

for first three-quarters of fiscal year 2010/11

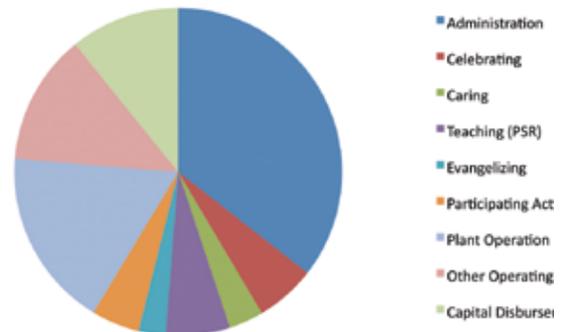
	JULY 2010 - MARCH 2011 ACTUAL OPERATING RECEIPTS	JULY 2010 - MARCH 2011 BUDGET
Revenues:		
Offertory Collections	\$700,093.76	\$696,600.00
Other Collections	\$6,464.00	\$15,000.00
Bequests, donations	\$44,036.68	\$45,000.00
Income from Parish Programs	\$4,054.00	\$33,750.00
Teaching Activity Income	\$11,280.00	\$5,625.00
Fund-Raising Income	\$104,146.84	\$63,750.00
Investment Income	\$75,706.69	\$22,500.00
Rental Receipts	\$380.00	\$3,750.00
Endowment Income	\$130,813.43	\$49,687.50
Misc. Receipts	\$57,416.34	\$6,000.00
Extraordinary Receipts	\$36,795.06	\$9,750.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$1,171,186.80	\$951,412.50

JULY 2010 - MARCH 2011 ACTUAL OPERATING RECEIPTS



	JULY 2010 - MARCH 2011 ACTUAL EXPENSES	JULY 2010 - MARCH 2011 BUDGET
Expenses:		
Administration	\$314,785.67	\$399,804.83
Celebrating	\$52,460.43	\$51,720.05
Caring	\$30,320.90	\$26,025.00
Teaching (PSR)	\$56,105.68	\$58,883.22
Evangelizing	\$23,675.57	\$20,625.00
Participating Activities	\$41,935.79	\$37,950.00
Plant Operation	\$156,381.55	\$142,430.88
Other Operating	\$113,979.44	\$162,492.75
Capital Disbursements	\$95,779.22	\$22,500.00
TOTAL Expenses	\$885,424.25	\$922,431.73
Net Operating Total	\$285,762.55	\$28,980.77

JULY 2010 - MARCH 2011 ACTUAL EXPENSES



Some highlights from the report are that the Fr. Francis Curran Endowment Fund income is \$130,000 to date. We are about \$220,000 to the good from our budgeted revenue. However, we have not yet forwarded the school subsidy to our inter-parochial school, Mater Dei Academy. The amount of that school subsidy will be about \$162,000. The expenses for General Administration are much below budget (actual \$21,558 vs. budgeted \$42,750). However, our Building Improvements category is over-budget due to the unexpected necessity of replacing the Rectory roof for \$25,000, in addition to new blowers for the church heating system at \$24,500.

Thank you for your generous stewardship of treasure to our parish!
Fr. Troha

Immaculate Conception

Catholic Church

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Mass Schedule

Saturday

5 p.m. Vigil Mass

Sunday

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

Monday through Thursday

7:45 a.m. in the rectory chapel

Friday

Tridentine Mass in the church, 7:30 p.m.