

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – JANUARY 24, 2021

Dear Parents and Parishioners,

When Bishop David Bonnar received the call from the Apostolic Nuncio that Pope Francis wanted him to accept the Ordination to the Fullness of Priesthood and then the Bishop of the Youngstown Diocese, he said the call was a great surprise. Then he added this element: “God is a God of surprises.”

Today’s readings illuminate the surprises of God. Jonah, an Israelite, is sent to the City of Nineveh which has no positive connection to the Israelites and in fact is a hostile city to them. Jonah is to preach the Word of God there. What a surprise!

The early stage of the ministry of Jesus in his public life comes after the arrest and soon the martyrdom of John the Baptist. In that negative atmosphere, Jesus proclaims the Good News of God: “The Kingdom of God is at hand; advance your thinking and believe in this good news.”

Even in the disturbing times of John the Baptist’s arrest, God surprises with the Good News that human life is extended into the Kingdom of Heaven. God is a God of surprises.

Nineteen of our young people are moving toward the Sacrament of Confirmation. Our students are young. So much time lies before them and so many surprises. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, may the God of Surprises direct their lives. May the gifts of the Holy Spirit come down upon them, especially the gifts of wisdom and perseverance in the Good News of the Gospel.

Patris Corde, With a Father’s Heart

Pope Francis has declared this is the year of St. Joseph, the Patron of the Universal Church. It is the 150th anniversary since Pope Pius IX declared St. Joseph as the Patron of the Catholic Church.

Last week I placed in the bulletin the introductory part of the Apostolic Letter by Pope Francis. St. Joseph is the Patron of our Parish and we are now in the 190th year since the parish began. I am placing excerpts each week from the Apostolic letter under the seven sections of the letter.

The Holy Father’s first heading is, Joseph, Our Beloved Father. “The greatness of St. Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. In this way he placed himself at the service of the entire plan of salvation.”

“Thanks to his role in salvation history, St. Joseph has always been venerated as a father by the Christian people. This is shown by the countless churches dedicated to him worldwide...”

“As a decedent of David from whose stock Jesus was to spring according to the promises made to David by the Prophet Nathan, and as the spouse of Mary of Nazareth, St. Joseph stands at the crossroads between the Old and New Testaments.

St. Joseph School Grades Filling Up Quickly

Principal Ike Holzapfel informs me that we have 190 registered for St. Joseph School for next fall. Grades K, 1, and 3, and 4 are almost full. Grade 2 is already full. We do have room especially in grades 5,6, 7, and 8. These grades are our High School Preparatory years.

The High School Preparatory Program features a great deal of individual direction. Children are just beginning to learn where their special talents exist. We especially prepare children for the more rigorous Catholic Schools that surround us.

This week’s enrollment is open to Catholic students from the surrounding area especially St. Matthew in Ellet. If you have not been a student before, you may be eligible for the EdChoice Grants depending upon financial eligibility.