

**FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK**

To my family of St. Joseph,

My last weekend with you has arrived and, as I have been saying to many of you the last month, I am filled with mixed emotions. Heavy-hearted in leaving this community that has been a true home to me the last six-plus years, but also open and excited about the opportunity to serve as a pastor in my home town for the first time in my priestly ministry (my first two assignments covering four years in Erie were as an assistant pastor and campus minister).

My six years and eight months at St. Joseph have been very fulfilling and rewarding. But before I look at all we have done and accomplished together, I look back on **some Warren "Bucket List Items" which I never experienced as well as some ideas that never actualized....** seeing a bear, camping in the Allegheny National Forest, eating Alice Tomasone's Pasta Carbonara, canoeing on the "lower" Allegheny from Glade Bridge to Betts Park particularly to navigate the infamous rapids of the refinery, boating on the Kinzua Reservoir, walking the entire North Warren Trail, zip-lining from Washington Park to the St. Joseph Bell Tower (wouldn't that be awesome?!), resurrecting the St. Joseph Festival, celebrating Mass at the Four Flags where the French Celeron Expedition celebrated the first Mass ever in this area in 1749. I am sure there are more but these are the one's of which came to mind.

That being said, I obviously want to focus more on all that we did do together. We have accomplished some great things together including: rebuilt our school population and enthusiasm, completed significant capital improvements to our campus including the successful Continuing the Legacy Campaign of 2011-13, significantly strengthened our parish identity and community bond, strengthened relationships at our parish, increased our staff and ministries, stabilized ministries, increased offertory, developed our Youth Ministry programming (including participation in programs such as National Catholic Youth Conference, Divine Mercy Encounter Retreat, Annual March for Life in DC, Catholic Heart Work Camp and National Evangelization Team), strengthened our work and prayer with other Christian Churches in Warren (including the annual Good Friday Service and Community Summer Service since 2014), developed our youth and adult faith formation programs and experiences (including multiple studies and three parish missions for Warren- 2011, 2013, 2015), hosted the Diocesan Junior High Youth Rally for the first time in Warren (April 2011), helped newly ordained Fr. Mike Polinek begin and grow in his priestly ministry with his first assignment in Warren (2010-12), hosted and helped form three seminarian students (Fr. Tom Trocchio, Fr. Jamie Power and Robert Nicastrò – who is doing well by the way), hosted one of Bishop Persico's Welcome Masses to the Diocese of Erie in October 2013, experienced an incredible year of mercy (2015-2016) in which we grew our community outreach to the needy significantly and were blessed to be one of the "Doors of Mercy" in the Diocese, helped host the first "West Fest: A Fun Day for Body, Mind and Soul" in Warren (2016), increased collaboration with the other Catholic Churches in the Warren Area, went on international pilgrimages to Rome (2012) and Israel (2015) as well as multiple domestic ones to Emmetsburg (2011), Our Lady of Fatima in New York (2012), Latrobe/Pittsburgh (2013), Syracuse/Geneseo (2014), Divine Mercy Shrine/ West Point (2016). And of course in addition to that, we have prepared for and celebrated many sacraments, we have enjoyed countless Masses, meals, Appreciation Dinners and feasts.

With all these accomplishments we have experienced over six years and eight months of my time here, the most important

accomplishment in all of this is that we have glorified our God through ensuring that Jesus Christ is the purpose and source of everything that we are and do.... and that is THE work of which we should be most proud because that is what God made us to do and it is that work in which we are most fulfilled. So well done for the work God has accomplished through you, St. Joseph!

In addition to the heavy heart I mentioned above, I also have a heart full of much gratitude to God for my time here at St. Joseph (and most recently at St. Luke). I am grateful for the ways you, my spiritual family have opened your lives, your hearts and your homes to me. You have given me the privilege of being with you in moments of great suffering and sorrow as well as great joy and celebration. You have shared your crosses and resurrections with me, you have allowed me to see the Paschal Mystery incarnate in the flesh through your lives. I am awed by your trust in me and your willingness to let me walk with you in your journey with and to God. I did not take that lightly and, as is always the case in participating in the mission of God, I have received much more than I have been asked to give.

Lastly, I have a heart full of hope. With **the new parish of St. Joseph (including the former St. Joseph and St. Luke Parishes) being born this Monday, February 13, 2017 as decreed by Bishop Persico back in September, I am extremely hopeful for the future here. St. Joseph becomes one community of persons (PARISH) with two buildings (CHURCHES). St. Joseph is the primary church and St. Luke is the secondary mission church.** We have been praying and working toward this day for almost four years, and specifically preparing for this day for the last six months. The focus on Transition the last six months has been on prayer and community building. Moving forward, in addition to those important components, this stage of implementation focuses on the nuts and bolts of merging finances, staffs, bulletins, councils, Faith Formation Programs and the many other committees and resources that St. Joseph and St. Luke have been blessed. This is the stage of more intensified work and the hope of the bishop is to have most of this work completed by the start of the new fiscal year on July 1<sup>st</sup> (which is one of the reasons the transitions were scheduled for February). This is the most difficult work of the whole process and I am hopeful that you will not lose focus and will dive in head first.... all hands and hearts on deck and do your part in lighting the candles of others! Keep praying, keep being open and again God will accomplish new and great things through all of you!

I am also hopeful for my new opportunity in my new assignment at Our Lady of Peace. O.L.P. in Erie is one of the two largest parishes in the Diocese of Erie with a population of about 2,400 families and 460 students at the school which is kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade (compared to St. Joseph which has 850 families and 125 students). It is located on 2401 W 38th St, Erie, PA 16506 which is the south western part of Millcreek Township (the most substantial township in Erie). I will have a parochial vicar (priest assistant), two deacons, and an additional lay staff of eight others. They have had three pastors in the last five years so there is a need for solid leadership and pastoral stability. I look forward to the challenges it will provide as well as the blessings that I know it will bring. I also look forward to serving God and the Church in my hometown of Erie (my parents and four siblings live in Erie with my brother Jim, his wife Christine, and their 5 children actually members of OLP).

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I also really enjoyed my interaction with the entire Warren Community and especially the opportunity to work with pastors from the other Christian denominations on the Warren Area Ministerial Association (WAMA) in which I have been very active. The parish community, as well as the broader Catholic community of Holy Redeemer, St. Anthony in Sheffield and St. Luke in Youngsville, has been extremely supportive and generous to me.

Feel free to keep in touch (the address is above). I will also have a new email address- [fr.rich@olp.org](mailto:fr.rich@olp.org). I also apologize in advance for my failure to reciprocate consistently. You are always welcome to stop by OLP for Mass or a quick hello when you are in Erie. I am sure I will be back to Warren at times but know that we are also encouraged as pastors to not hover at our old assignments and potentially inhibit the new pastor's ministry- so I cannot return consistently as much as I might want, plus my work at OLP must be the priority.

So I cannot say enough that I thank you, I love you and I will always pray for you. Do not forget that we have a special bond, not only because I was your pastor and spiritual father for these years, but even more deeply that we are members of the mystical Body of Christ. We are united in our Savior in a very real and special way, and we experience that unity most fully when we celebrate Mass wherever we are and even as distance separates us. So I will be united with you in that way every day and I will continue to love you through my prayers offered for you. In addition to the wonderful gifts and cards you have again showered me with, the greatest gift you can give me is to give your life more fully to God. That's the gift that matters most for now and eternity. I pray that gift is yours to be given and yours received! God bless you and may God bless our merger and our new beginnings ahead!

Yours in Christ's love,

**Fr. Rich**

Our Lady of Perpetual Help... pray for us!

Our Lady of Peace... pray for us!

St. Joseph... pray for us!

St. Luke.... pray for us!

St. Patrick, patron of the Diocese of Erie.... pray



*The last children's Mass with current school altar servers.*

## ***PARISH NEWS***

**CCY THANK YOU** to all who supported the CCY Bob Evans Community Fundraiser this past Thursday for Catholic Heart Work Camp Roanoke, VA. It was a success, with 15% of the proceeds raising a donation in the amount of \$292.00. Thanks for your help and support in making these trips available for our youth!

**IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO SIGN UP FOR THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN** The St. Joseph Church adult faith formation committee is offering the Little Rock Scripture study of the Gospel according to John. Classes start February 5<sup>th</sup> from 3-4:30pm. The cost for the course is \$25. You can just show up this Sunday or next. We have ordered extra materials.

**LAST CALL CHWC ROANOKE** If you are considering going to Roanoke with us this summer, sign up today, before the spots are gone! The trip is from July 16-22. The cost is \$150.00 per person and can be paid in installments. The balance of the trip is paid by fundraisers. If you have already reserved your spot, please secure the spot with a payment asap. Going into 8<sup>th</sup> grade and older are welcome. Contact Jennifer at 688-3842. Don't miss out on this tremendous experience of service, love, worship and community!

**TIME TO RETURN PALMS** There are boxes located at the exits of the church so you can return your old palms. The boxes will be out until February 28<sup>th</sup> at which time the palms will be burned for ashes to be used at Masses on Ash Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, both the 12:05pm School Mass and the 5:30pm Mass.

**WELCOME CELEBRATION** On Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, come celebrate the uniting of St. Luke parish with St. Joseph parish. After the 10:30am Mass at St. Joseph there will be a brunch in the gymnasium. All are welcome to join in food and fellowship, as we unite as brothers and sisters in Christ. This is also a great opportunity to get to meet our new pastor, Fr. Rick Tomasone. All you need to do is come!

**4<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL BILLY PAUL MEMORIAL PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT** Mark your calendars for Sunday, March 5<sup>th</sup>! The tournament starts at 11am in the school gymnasium. The fee is \$15 per person. Team up with a friend and have a blast. All proceeds benefit CCY attending Catholic Heart Work Camp. If you don't know how to play but want to contribute, monetary donations are appreciated. This is open to anyone from novice to skilled levels. Concessions will be available. Awards given to top finishers. Entry deadline is Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. Please make checks payable to CCY and mail them to Marlene Sandberg, 300 Tall Trees Road, Warren, PA 16365. For starting times and questions please call Marlene Sandberg at 688-1607.

**2232 MEN'S CONFERENCE** The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual 2232 Men's Conference will be on Saturday, March 25 at the Erie Warner Theatre, 811 State Street, Erie. Registration starts at 8am and the conference lasts until 3:30pm. Cost is \$40 per person, but group rates are available. Please contact Troy McFate, 563-7339 if you are interested in attending.

**MEMBERSHIP DRIVE** The Knights of Columbus of Warren Council 964 have begun their 2017 Membership Drive. We are looking for a few good men to become members. If you are a practicing Catholic over the age of 18 and are looking to live your faith by helping others, then the K. of C. is for you. For any man who might be interested in joining at this time, there is a folder with membership applications inside on the bulletin board at the main entrance. For more information about the Knights, you may contact Membership Director Chuck Mahood at 723-6618 or 730-3001.

**MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK**

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK**

**Sunday, 2/12 - Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
 8:45am Mass at St. Luke in Youngsville  
 10:30am Seth Amsdell by Victor & Kathy Amsdell (Adult Choir)

**Monday, 2/13 - Weekday**  
 NO Mass/ NO Communion Service

**Tuesday, 2/14 - Saints Cyril, Monk and Methodius**  
 12:05pm Mary Haight, George & Ellen Kumm by McAvoy Family

**Wednesday, 2/15 - Weekday**  
 9:05am Jackie Franklin by Mike & Lisa Lewis - School Mass  
 1:30pm Catholic Daughter of America Court #834 @ Warren Manor

**Thursday, 2/16 - Weekday**  
 12:05pm Lorraine Bengston by Family

**Friday, 2/17 - The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order**  
 8:00am Marilyn Nyberg by Carolyn O'Donnell

**Saturday, 2/18 - Weekday**  
 8:00am Marvene Rich by Mike & Lisa Lewis  
 5:30pm Living and Deceased Parishioners of Saint Joseph

**Sunday, 2/19 - Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
 8:45am Mass at St. Luke in Youngsville  
 10:30am Frank Chiodo by Knights of Columbus #964 (Adult Choir)

**Monday** Genesis 4:1-15, 25; Gospel - Mark 8:11-13  
**Tuesday** Genesis 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10; Gospel - Mark 8:14-21  
**Wednesday** Genesis 8:6-13, 20-22; Gospel - Mark 8:22-26  
**Thursday** Genesis 9:1-13; Gospel - Mark 8:27-33  
**Friday** Genesis 11:1-9; Gospel - Mark 8:34-9:1  
**Saturday** Hebrews 11:1-7; Gospel - Mark 9:2-13  
**Sunday** Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18; 1 Corinthians 3:16-23; Gospel - Matthew 5:38-48

WEEKLY SANCTUARY CANDLES in memory of  
 Dr. Harold Reinhard by Karen Wingard

**COMING EVENTS**

**Sunday, February 12**  
 9:00am K-10 Faith Formation (School)  
 11:30am Farewell Reception (Gym)  
 3:00pm The Gospel of John (Meyer Hall)  
 7:00pm MS CCY (Youth Room)

**Tuesday, February 14**  
 4:30pm Soup Kitchen (Cafeteria)

**Wednesday, February 15**  
 10:30am Faith Share (Meyer Hall)  
 1:30pm Mass at Warren Manor  
 6:30pm RCIA (Meyer Hall)  
 7:00pm Choir (Church)

**Thursday, February 16**  
 12:30pm Adoration (Mother's Chapel)  
 5:30pm School Board Advisory Meeting (School)  
 8:15pm Night Prayer & Benediction (Mother's Chapel)

**Friday, February 17**  
 8:00am-12:00pm Kindergarten Roundup (School)  
 3:00pm RCIA Retreat

**Saturday, February 18**  
 4:30pm Reconciliation (Church)

**Sunday, February 19**  
 NO Faith Formation  
 11:30am Welcome Celebration Brunch (Gym)  
 3:00pm The Gospel of John (Meyer Hall)

In your charity please pray for the soul of **Louis Rizzardi**, father of **Louis & Penny Rizzardi** and **Shirleen & Gregg Keller**, whose Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Wednesday, February 8. We extend our sympathy to his family, and ask God's love and strength to bring them peace and consolation.

**LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULES**

|                        | <u>Lector</u> | <u>Extraordinary Ministers</u>  | <u>Altar Servers</u>                     |
|------------------------|---------------|---|--|
| <b>2/18</b><br>5:30pm  | H/H LeMeur    | B Williams, J Anderson, J Lim,<br>P Bailey, R & T Fadale, D Geiger                      | O Strandburg<br>A Strandburg<br>L Walker |
| <b>2/19</b><br>10:30am | M Smelko      | G & M Belleau, D Pusateri,<br>*C Bevacqua, *J Kostrzewski,<br>A Kirkpatrick, *T Siliano | C Smelko<br>C Smelko<br>L Smelko         |



**Prayer Chain** If you have prayer intentions, please call Charmell Feaster at 726-0455. Also if you would like to know more about this ministry and be a part of praying for others, give Charmell a call today!

**VOCATIONS ICON**  
 We would like to thank the **David & Jennifer Wortman Family** for taking the Vocations Icon this week and praying for an increase in vocations here at St. Joseph Catholic Church.

Weekly Donations - February 5: \$ 5,900  
 CSA Pledged: \$124,995; Paid to date: \$ 121,562  
 Thank you for your continued generosity!

**SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL**  
 If you or your children want to send your/their child/ren to St. Joseph Catholic School, please call the school at 814-723-2030. We have open enrollment. There are numerous grants and scholarships available. Call the school today.  
 Reminder that Kindergarten Roundup is February 17<sup>th</sup>, and Pre-School Roundup is March 10<sup>th</sup>.

SPONSOR OF THE WEEK  
**A & B Heating**  
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