

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

To my family of St. Joseph,

Happy St. Valentine's Day! This used to be a Liturgical Feast Day but when the calendar was adjusted in the late 1960s it was removed and then became quite secularized and distanced from the spiritual roots. Recall the tradition regarding St. Valentine who was a priest who would marry couples secretly because marriage was discouraged by the Roman Empire (seeing marriage as an obstacle to military service which the empire needed to maintain its power). He eventually was caught and martyred for violating the law and became the patron of marriage and love.

It is unfortunate that the English language does not have different words for love like Greek. In the Greek we find the deepest and greatest love of God called Agape. It is the sacrificial love Jesus calls us to when he says there is no greater love than to give one's life for one's friends and that Jesus witnesses to on the cross. It is the love that we participate in when we put the good of another before oneself and commit to loving another for the rest of our lives. It is a choice, an act of the will, and not an emotion or feeling. It is deeper and greater than the love of affection, of friendship or of family (not that all those loves do not lead to agape).

At a time when love is so misunderstood by our culture, let us pray that the agape love of God can be renewed in our marriages, friendships and families at St. Joseph and throughout the world. At a time when less couples are approaching the church to be married sacramentally, let us pray that St. Valentine, who was willing to die for sacramental marriage, can inspire and intercede for our young couples to become united at the altar in that greatest expression of agape love in our human existence.

May God bless our world with TRUE LOVE and our week ahead!

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Rich

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

St. Joseph.... pray for us!

St. Valentine... pray for us!

Notes from the pastor...

****Divine Mercy Encounter Retreat (DME)** Please pray for the DME Retreat this weekend. I ask your particular prayers for myself and Craig Kostrzewski who are on the team, and Margie Fincher, Dominick Giannini, Andrea Kiehl, Ryan McGuinness, and Natalie Peterson from Warren who will be attending the retreat.

****CSA 2016** Last weekend we started our **Catholic Services Appeal 2016**, which is our annual appeal for spiritual and financial support of our Erie Diocesan Church. You have been very generous to our Catholic Services Appeal in the past and I am grateful for your support. The theme of the Appeal this year is **"Be Lights of Hope Through Giving."** Each year the Diocese funds programs that reach out to people all over Northwestern Pennsylvania and they provide administrative and ministerial services that we could not do otherwise. Your generosity enables many people to continue the mission of service, education and outreach. **Our parish assessment owed to the diocese for this purpose is \$50,934.** Since we are starting an endowment for our school to which some of you have already contributed (and we will be sending letter out in April for the rest of your support), **our parish goal is lower than last year at \$90,000.** Remember that all money pledged beyond the diocesan assessment (\$50,934) remains in the parish and this year our **CSA projects are cleaning and fortifying the bell tower, replacing the carpet in the sacristy and replacing the tile between the church and school.**

Pledge envelopes for your financial and/or spiritual pledge can be found in the pews. It is important that you return the pledge even if there is not a financial dimension to your pledge because it lets me know you support the mission of our parish and also ensures you will not receive other follow-up letters that will be sent to those who give no response. Thank you for your consideration and support of this important appeal.

****Fr. Rich Away** Thank you to Msgr. Richard Sullivan, a retired priest of our Diocese and a member of my Jesus Caritas Priest Group, for filling in at all the Masses this weekend. Please give him our typical St. Joseph welcome as an expression of my gratitude for his support. I will go right from retreat into my annual February mini-vacation (Feb 15-18) that I usually try to get in before Lent but with Catholic Schools Week this year that was not possible. So there will be no Liturgies at SJ on Monday and Tuesday of this week (Feb 15-16). Fr. Jim Gutting will be covering the School Mass on Wednesday, February 17th and any emergencies. I return for the 12 Noon Lenten Service on Thursday, February 18th at First United Methodist Church where I will preach, and then for 5:30pm Mass that day.

****24 Hours for the Lord/Masses of Mercy** In two weekends (Feb 27/28) at our Masses of Mercy we will focus on discussing a spiritual event that Pope Francis has asked all Diocese to observe during this Jubilee Year of Mercy. **The Pope has been celebrating "24 Hours for the Lord" in Rome the past several years during Lent and is hoping the universal church will follow suit. He is asking churches to be open and priests available for confession and counseling on March 4-5 (Friday-Saturday).** Here at St. Joseph, the church will be open from 6am March 4th until 7pm March 5th. We will explain the schedule with more detail at our Masses of Mercy, but activities for those days will include- School Penance Service (where we encourage school parents to join), Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 8am Friday to 8am Saturday (with the specific intention of praying for the Middle School Feasibility Study at SJCS), recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet and the Rosary, and Stations of the Cross. We hope to advertise this event in the Warren Community to extend awareness beyond our parish but your help in inviting people who have been away from the church or might need the church at this time is very important, as are your prayers for this effort.

****Feasibility Study for SJCS Grades 6-8th** I want to start assembling a committee that will help conduct a study with the help of the Diocese and Meitler Consultants, who have been working with the Diocese throughout this planning process. My goal is to have a decision on whether to move into grades 6-8 by December 2016. If we decide along with the bishop to move forward with these grades, I would **tentatively** set September of 2017 as a start date. If you are interested in serving on this committee to help discern this significant possibility for our school, please contact me.

****Rite of Sending and Election for RCIA** Sunday, Feb 14 at the 10:30am Mass, Msgr. Sullivan will lead our parish in the Rite of Sending for our RCIA Candidates. We send them to Bishop Persico for the Rite of Election at St. Peter's Cathedral where the Bishop will receive them and hundreds of other candidates who are joining the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Erie this year. Please keep the candidates and their sponsors in your prayers as they enter this last stage of RCIA which is called the Period of Enlightenment/Purification, in which they intensify their spiritual preparation for becoming fully initiated members of our Catholic Community. Our candidates this year are: Dena Pearson, sponsor Carrie Pearson; Ken Reiff, sponsor Patti Colosimo; Marianne Scheer, sponsor Bob Scheer; and Doug Hoffman, sponsor Donna Hoffman (Doug has decided to confirm while in Florida. We will welcome him upon his return in late April).

Additional Comments...

****Newsboys Concert** On **Thursday, April 7th**, the Newsboys (a Contemporary Christian Music band) will be coming to Erie for a concert at the Warner Theatre. There will be a group going from St. Joseph leaving the parking lot at 3:45pm (car pooling if interested). We will go to dinner and then the concert at 7pm. Tickets are \$27.00 each for the group rate of at least ten and tickets are limited so please let the office know by February 15th if you want to join us.

****West Fest** As a result of recent collaboration with the other West End Churches, we are planning a one day event that these churches would like to organize as a “blessing” to the Warren Community. **“The West Fest: A Fun Day for Body, Mind and Soul” will be held on Saturday, May 7th from 11am-4pm on the grounds of all four West End Churches (St. Joseph, Trinity Episcopal, Warren Wesleyan and Salvation Army).** Each campus will focus on aspects of spiritual, physical, mental and emotional “wellness” while also selling food and offering various forms of entertainment. This event fits well into our Jubilee Year of Mercy in it’s ecumenical spirit as well as it seeking to help our community connect with the services that desire to mercifully help them. Right now we are assembling a leadership team to organize this ambitious event. If you are interested in helping with planning, promotion, volunteering, praying or whatever is necessary, please contact me at the office. I also ask you to lift up this effort in your prayers so that God can truly be glorified as we seek to support our community as Christians.

****Joseph Bonadi Endowment** I want to take a moment to thank Joseph Bonadi who passed away before my arrival at St. Joseph. Through his estate, Joseph left our parish half of his inheritance in the form of an annuity which provides a perpetual gift to St. Joseph. Every four months we receive \$3,600 from this investment gift and this is a huge help in off-setting our operating costs. I hope Mr. Bonadi can inspire the living members of our parish to consider your parish family of St. Joseph in your will.

PARISH NEWS

THANK YOU We would like to thank Josie Gerardi for sewing our new side banners that hang along both east and west walls of the Church proper.

RCIA In the past few years our RCIA candidates have taken on a service project during Lent. This year our candidates have chosen to support the Year of Mercy, Donations of Mercy board. Thank you to Dena, Ken, Marianne and all of you who support the board.



Mercy Meter

Pope Francis says in *Misericordiae Vultus (the papal bull on the Year of Mercy)* that the season of Lent during this Jubilee Year should also be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God’s mercy. Please make sure you are taking advantage of Reconciliation opportunities this Lenten season and allow God’s incredible gift of forgiveness to shower over you and inspire you to carry that

spirit out to the greater world. Thank you so much for all your acts of mercy the past few weeks. We are really helping the Salvation Army meet the needs of those in need in our community; furniture has been delivered, fire victims have been helped, 339 rolls of paper towels were collected and **beef stew, Spaghetti O’s, and Beef-a-Roni** are pouring in! Thank you. Thank you! Please check those expiration dates.

This week invite someone to Mass; with you that may have been away from the Church or might be interested in exploring the Catholic faith. SHOW LOVE! The next ministry formation will be February 21st at 6:30 pm for the Pastoral Council, Finance Council, Buildings and Grounds.

From the Halls of St. Joseph Catholic School

A good time was had by who attended our Annual reverse Raffle. Basket winners are: Show Bunny Give-Away—Vilma Siliano; Experience Pittsburgh—Kirsten Darling; Dinner at the Rectory—Judy Gallucci-grow; Pittsburgh Steelers party—Amy Lyon; Buffalo Bills Package—Meghan Debo; Grilling/BBQ—Rose Troyan; How does your garden grow—Kathleen Creek; YMCA Membership—Renee Getner; Kids Arts & Crafts—Ann Wortman; Norte Dame tickets—Jennifer Wortman; Erie Seawolves tickets—Mary Mangione; Relax & Enjoy—Victor Amsdell; Erie Otter tickets—Jen Gern; Pro football Hall of Fame Day—Jason Lyon; Essential Oils & Wellness—Linda Anderson; Scratch tickets/Cash—Heather Alexander; Round of Golf & Dinner—Jennifer Wortman; Night at the Movies—Sue Vanderveld; Scratch tickets/Cash—Tom Best, Sr.; Italian dinner fixins—Jane Solick; Crude Oil & safety essentials—James Wardrop; Bakers dream—Richard Sharp; Coffee & Chocolates—Meghan Debo; Mind, Body & Soul—Mike Henry; Beautiful Yourself—Terry Nelson; Puzzles & Games—Pat Bailey; Kids Books—Eric Ahl; Girls at play—Laura Pearson; Boys Mania—Peggy Morgan; Healthy You—Rachel Harvey; Preschool Play—Nickie Gern; Boys Toys—Kendra Pantuso; Baby Dolls—Bob Bablak; Seasonings & Mixes—John Heffern; Golfing—Lea Adams; Afghan & Goodies—Mike Henry; Great outdoors—Mike Debo. Congratulations everyone!

Kindergarten Round-up is February 19. If you have a child, grandchildren or neighbors who will starting school this fall, please consider sending the child to Saint Joseph Catholic School. Call the school for full details and get them registered today!

FAITH FORMATION Thank you to all the 6-10th grade students who participated in our retreats this past weekend. Pray that they will continue to be open to God’s graces and grow in a deeper relationship with Him. Thank you to Father Steve Schreiber and the Mercyhurst University Myracle retreat team for joining us!

CONFIRMATION ADORATION We would like to have adoration on Monday, April 4th from 8:30 am until 5 pm to pray for our candidates and their futures that they may continue to use the Holy Spirit as a valuable gift in discerning life decisions. If you are able to commit to a half an hour or an hour please call or text Jennifer at 688-3842 or email her. All are welcome!

CHWC-NASHVILLE If you have are interested in going to Nashville for Catholic Heart Workcamp this summer (JULY 17-23) please let Anna Anderson or Jennifer Wortman know **NOW!** Our 25 spots are filling and we want to get you registered **ASAP.** The cost is \$150.00; at least \$75.00 is due now.

LENTEN OPPORTUNITIES

Daily Mass will be celebrated in the Main Church through out Lent.

Soup & Bread Mondays during Lent, Holy Redeemer will have Mass at 5:30pm followed by a Soup and Bread meal.

Holden Evening Prayer will be Tuesdays during Lent. Services start at 7pm. St. Joseph will host on Tuesday, February 23rd. Refreshments will follow in the cafeteria.

Thursdays during Lent, Adoration is from 8am until night prayer and benediction at 8:15pm in the Mother’s Chapel. Also the First United Methodist Church will have a thirty-minute noon Lenten Prayer Service followed by a soup and pie luncheon.

Fish Fry St. Anthony in Sheffield along with the K of C is hosting the fish fry at St. Paul Center every Friday evening from 5-7pm or until they sell out.

Stations of the Cross We will have Stations of the Cross Fridays in the Main Church starting at **6pm.** Please note the time change! If you prefer, School Stations of the Cross will be at 12:45pm on Tuesdays, also in the Main Church.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, 2/14 - First Sunday of Lent

8:00am Mary Ellen Vizza by Tom & Shari Sekelsky
10:30am Living and Deceased Parishioners of Saint Joseph

Monday, 2/15 - Lenten Weekday

NO Mass / NO Communion Service

Tuesday, 2/16 - Lenten Weekday

NO Mass / NO Communion Service

Wednesday, 2/17 - The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order

9:05am Phyllis Sobina by Don & Nancy Sobina

Thursday, 2/18 - Lenten Weekday

5:30pm Cathie Rice by M/M Dale Lewes and Rosemary Kielar

Friday, 2/19 - Lenten Weekday

8:00am Imogene Weidert by Mike & Lisa Lewis

Saturday, 2/20 - Lenten Weekday

8:00am Ulmar & Frances Fritz, Captain David E. Fritz by Wortman Family

5:30pm Robert, Michael and Colleen Cunningham by Jackie

Sunday, 2/21 - Second Sunday of Lent

8:00am Rudy Funari by Bud & Margaret
10:30am Living and Deceased Parishioners of Saint Joseph

Monday Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18; Gospel - Matthew 25:31-46
Tuesday Isaiah 55:10-11; Gospel - Matthew 6:7-15
Wednesday Jonah 3:1-10; Gospel - Luke 11:29-32
Thursday Esther C:12, 14-16,23-25; Gospel - Matthew 7:7-12
Friday Ezekiel 18:21-28; Gospel - Matthew 5:20-26
Saturday Deuteronomy 26:16-19; Gospel - Matthew 5:43-48
Sunday Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18; Philippians 3:17-4:1; Gospel - Luke 9:28b-36

WEEKLY SANCTUARY CANDLES in memory of
Alice Tomasone by Charles & Catherine Ditz

COMING EVENTS

Sunday, February 14
9:00am K-9 Faith Formation (School)
10-11 Confirmation (School)
10:30am RCIA Rite of Sending at Mass (Church)
7:00pm HS CCY (Youth Room)

Tuesday, February 16
12:45pm School Stations of the Cross (Church)
3:30pm Mass at Warren State Hospital
4:30pm Soup Kitchen (Cafeteria)
7:00pm Holden Evening Prayer @ First Lutheran

Wednesday, February 17
9:05am School Mass (Church)
10:30am Faith Share (Meyer Hall)
6:30pm RCIA (Meyer Hall)
7:00pm Choir Practice (Church)

Thursday, February 18
8:00am Adoration (Mother's Chapel)
12:00pm Lenten Prayer Service (FUMC)
6:30pm Rediscover Catholicism (Meyer Hall)
8:15pm Night Prayer & Benediction (Mother's Chapel)

Friday, February 19
8:00am-Noon Kindergarten Round-Up (School)
5:00pm Fish Fry (St. Paul Center-Sheffield)
6:00pm Stations of the Cross (Church)

Saturday, February 20
4:30pm Reconciliation (Church)
5:30pm RCIA Penitential Rite at Mass (Church)

Sunday, February 21
Coffee/Pastries after Masses
9:00am K-9 Faith Formation (School)
10-11 Confirmation (School)
10:30am Confirmation Profession of Faith (Church)
6:00pm Formation for Mercy (Meyer Hall)
7:00pm MS CCY (Youth Room)

In your prayers, please pray for the soul of **John Gagliardi** whose Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Thursday. 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>
2/20 5:30pm	H/H LeMeur	R Kujawa, F Perrin, B McAvoy, C & K Darling, D Labowski	E Darling I Darling
2/21 8:00am	V Amsdell	B & B Crowley, R Sharp, B & B Long, P Rickert	J Funari J Funari
2/21 10:30am	Confirmation Students	*T Siliano, V Siliano, *A Wortman, N Berardi, A Kirkpatrick, D Bogniak, *C Bevacqua	Confirmation Students

VOCATIONS ICON

We would like to thank the **Bob & Marianne Scheer** for taking the Vocations Icon this week and praying for an increase in vocations here at St. Joseph.

News around the Area

St. John Church in Tidioute will sell frozen pierogi during the Lenten season. Potato & cheese and potato & sauerkraut pierogi will be available every Saturday in the Church center from Feb. 13-March 19, 1pm-4pm. Cost is \$9/dozen; \$6/half dozen. Call Fran O'Hosky at 484-7157 to pre-order no later than Thursday each week. Walk-in are welcome.

ADULT FORMATION NEWS

If you missed the first study on Rediscover Catholicism, it's not too late! We still have sessions on February 18 and 25 and March 3, 10 and 17, **please contact the parish office to sign up**. If you need a copy of the book to prepare for the study, please let the office know and one will be given to you. This is a great opportunity to awaken your mind to the amazing, historical and inspiring Catholic faith. Don't just go through the motions of Mass each week but enjoy it, understand it and immerse yourself in it more fully!

Please take your **FREE** copy of Rediscover Jesus this weekend after Mass and sign up online at DynamicCatholic.com/Lent. Each day of Lent you will get an inspirational email with a short video featuring Matthew Kelly. Let Matthew Kelly take you on a spiritual journey and let's rediscover ourselves and our relationship with God this Lent.

Weekly Donations - February 7: \$ 10,495
Thank you for your continued generosity!

SPONSOR OF THE WEEK

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