

THE PHILADELPHIA ORDINARIATE POST

A NEWSLETTER OF THE CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

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6611 ARDLEIGH STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19119

215-247-1092

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Dear Parishioners and Friends,

It was a joyous and glorious occasion on the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity, when 113 people gathered at the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption to celebrate the beginning of the Blessed John Henry Newman Fellowship as a congregation within the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter. Nineteen were received and confirmed (see photo), which brings the Ordinariate membership of the Fellowship to 31. It is the end of an unexpectedly long road for the members of the Fellowship, who have been seeking the Ordinariate since *Anglicanorum coetibus* came out on November 4th, 2009. Yet it is not so much the end of the road as the beginning of a new life, life in full communion with the Catholic Church. Those who have gone before (including the Blessed Cardinal Newman) have found unexpected blessings, and unexpected trials.

One of the priests at the Ordinariate clergy gathering the end of October (he had been in the Pastoral Provision for some years before the Ordinariate came into being) told me to let the Fellowship know that suffering lies ahead. It does, of course. All Christians are called to walk in the way of the Cross. That is the only safe road for us. Suffering comes with the territory. The Ordinariate is a work of God, and Satan opposes the works of God. It is only to be expected that he will oppose the Ordinariate in any way he can. There will be misunderstandings. There will be difficulties. We will encounter those who do not wish the Ordinariate to succeed in its mission. Besides all this, we will still have to struggle with the same daily trials which were ours before we crossed the Tiber. Our weaknesses, moral and ascetic, are not instantly removed by coming into the Communion of the Catholic Church. While we receive renewed grace, we are still the same people we were before.



Nevertheless, I think I can confidently add that suffering is not all that lies ahead! We at St Michael's found that we had been wasting considerable energy watching our backs, which we no longer needed to do in the Catholic Church. This frees up energy for better things, like evangelism. We can now tell what the Church teaches. We have many new brothers and sisters. We have a specific mission (not just trying to survive). God is good, even when life is hard.

With that in mind, we can and should rejoice at this step along the way. Fr Carbonaro and a large number of his parishioners from Our Lady of the Assumption joined us for the Mass and reception afterward, and were unfailingly welcoming and supportive. Fr Carbonaro assisted at the Mass (Monsignor Malone, a retired priest who lives at OLA, also attended), and he and many of his folk commented on the beauty of the liturgy. A significant number of St Michael's people also attended (things were a little sparse at St Michael's that morning), and put on the reception. Special thanks goes to Bell Anderson, who organized the food and drink, and provided much of it herself, including her famous meatballs. One of the new Catholics remarked, "It is worth coming into the Catholic Church just to get Bell's meatballs." Bill Gatens and the choir surpassed their usual high standard with the music. At the risk of repeating myself, I also want to thank Fr Carbonaro for taking us in, and welcoming us so graciously. This made it possible for those entering the Catholic Church to do so in an actual Catholic Church – certainly the way it should be done. I want to share this photo, which shows what we found when we came to OLA for our first Mass: someone had taken the trouble to create this poster for us, welcoming us to our new home.



While it is right and proper to enjoy the moment, we will also be turning to the next steps in the way. I would invite all the members of the Newman Fellowship to a congregational meeting after Mass on November 9th, the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica (see below). We will discuss a number of things related to what

happens next. We will need to get the legal structure of the Fellowship in order, so that we can become a recognized community in the Ordinariate. We need to focus on our outreach and mission, so we will be talking about the mission of an Ordinariate community and how we can pursue it. We will talk about publicity – getting the word out – and evangelization. We'll be talking about future Sunday evening classes.



The Sunday Masses continue at 6 at OLA for the foreseeable future. Invite your friends! Enemies are also welcome. Regular confession is good for all of us. To make that easier, I will be in the confessional at OLA on Sunday from 5:30-5:45. I am available at other times by appointment (and at St Michael's 8:30-8:45 on Sunday).

Dedication of the Lateran Basilica

November 9th in the Ordinariate (and Latin Rite) calendar is the Feast of the Dedication of St John Lateran. As good Anglicans, used to the Prayer Book, you are no doubt wondering, what is the Lateran Basilica, and why are we celebrating its dedication, and on a Sunday no less? St John Lateran is an Archbasilica (the only one), and the cathedral church for the Diocese of Rome, and thus the mother church for the Catholic Church. It is also thought to be the first church to be consecrated by a specific consecration service – in 324 by Pope Sylvester. Before this, when it was illegal for the church to own property, Mass was held in homes and other places, and the few church buildings there were considered consecrated when the Mass was first celebrated there.

The basilica was first constructed by the Emperor Constantine, on the site of the Laterani family palace in Rome. It is one of the four basilicas he built in Rome, along with St Peter's, St Mary Major and St Paul's Outside the Walls. St John's was originally dedicated to Our Holy Savior. In the sixth century, the names of St John the Baptist and St John the Evangelist were added, and it is commonly called St John Lateran. It has been extensively rebuilt over the years, though much of the baptistry that Constantine built is intact. The Ordinariate clergy on their pilgrimage to Rome last winter con-celebrated at St John Lateran.

In an address on this Feast in 2008, Pope Benedict said:

On this solemnity the Word of God recalls an essential truth: the temple of stones is a symbol of the living Church, the Christian community, which in their letters the Apostles Peter and Paul already understood as a "spiritual edifice," built by God with "living stones," namely, Christians themselves, upon the one foundation of Jesus Christ, who is called the "cornerstone" (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:9-11, 16-17; 1 Peter 2:4-8; Ephesians 2:20-22). "Brothers, you are God's building," St. Paul wrote, and added: "holy is God's temple, which you are" (1 Corinthians 3:9c, 17).

The beauty and harmony of the churches, destined to give praise to God, also draws us human beings, limited and sinful, to convert to form a "cosmos," a well-ordered structure, in intimate communion with Jesus, who is the true Saint of saints. This happens in a culminating way in the Eucharistic liturgy, in which the "ecclesia," that is, the community of the baptized, come together in a unified way to listen to the Word of God and nourish themselves with the Body and Blood of Christ. From these two tables the Church of living stones is built up in truth and charity and is internally formed by the Holy Spirit transforming herself into what she receives, conforming herself more and more to the Lord Jesus Christ. She herself, if she lives in sincere and fraternal unity, in this way becomes the spiritual sacrifice pleasing to God.

Dear friends, today's feast celebrates a mystery that is always relevant: God's desire to build a spiritual temple in the world, a community that worships him in spirit and truth (cf. John 4:23-24). But this observance also reminds us of the importance of the material buildings in which the community gathers to celebrate the praises of God. Every community therefore has the duty to take special care of its own sacred buildings, which are a precious religious and historical patrimony. For this we call upon the intercession of Mary Most Holy, that she help us to become, like her, the "house of God," living temple of his love.

As the mother church, the celebration of St John Lateran's dedication reminds us of the blessings which God gives us in allowing us to set apart churches for holy use, most especially for the offering of the Holy Sacrifice. It also reminds us that there was a time – several centuries at the beginning of the Christian era – when the church could not do this, and had to make do with worship outdoors, in homes, in caves and the catacombs, wherever it could be managed. It is a time for us to give special thanks for Holy Cross Church and Our Lady of the Assumption, the holy places where we are now privileged to worship God and offer the Holy Sacrifice.

Advent

Advent begins on November 30th (sneaking up on us). Our accustomed Advent Quiet is scheduled for Saturday, December 6th. It begins with Mass at 9:30 in the Chapel at St Therese. We conclude by 2:30 with Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. In addition to the addresses, there will be silence and opportunity for Confession. Whether you do it at the Quiet Day or not, I encourage you to make a sacramental Confession before Christmas, as part of your Advent preparation to receive Christ as He comes in the manger at Bethlehem. December is not just a time to prepare our homes for Christmas – the tree, gifts, food, etc. – more importantly it is a time to prepare our hearts. The sacrament of Penance is one means, and an important one.

I would also remind you of the daily Mass schedule: Tuesday and Thursday at 6 p.m., Wednesday (with healing) at 10 a.m., Friday at 8 a.m. and Saturday at 9:30. The weekday Masses are all in the Chapel at St Therese (enter from the rectory driveway; the chapel door is on the Upsal Street side of the school building).

Other Events

In preparation for the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia in September, 2015, a brief catechism has been prepared, with the idea that parishes study one of the ten principal themes of the Meeting each month between now and the Meeting. We will begin this study on November 16th at both St Michael's and the Newman Fellowship, with classes after Mass. The November theme is Created For Joy. I have a few copies of the book, *Love is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive* (courtesy of Mark Johnson), if you would like to do a little reading (which I commend to you).

Also on the 16th, at St Michael's, the children and youth of the congregation will be preparing the Christmas Shoe Box Gifts, which will be sent (along with millions of others from all over the country) to poor children around the world through the ministry of Samaritan's Purse. We are collecting appropriate items to pack into the boxes, and if you would like to help, please see the list of things needed at coffee hour or speak with Beth.



On Thanksgiving Day, November 27th, there will be a Mass at Holy Cross at 10 a.m. There will be no Masses the Friday or Saturday after Thanksgiving.

Yours faithfully,
Fr David Ousley