

# THE PHILADELPHIA ORDINARIATE POST

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A NEWSLETTER OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH  
THE PERSONAL ORDINARIATE OF THE CHAIR OF SAINT PETER IN THE PHILADELPHIA AREA

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June, 2019

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

The Ordinariate is an instance of “realized ecumenism,” healing a breach in the Body of Christ by bringing groups of Anglicans into the full communion of the Catholic Church. While unity (without uniformity) is essential to our identity, we also have an evangelizing mission: to bring others, whether as individuals or families or communities, to know Christ in the fulness of the Catholic faith and within the Catholic Church. We preserve the Anglican Patrimony within the Catholic Church not just for our own pleasure and comfort, but for the sake of the mission – ecumenical and evangelical.

A wonderful instance of our mission took place last Saturday, when fifty-five people from St John’s and the Legion of Mary went knocking on doors in Bridgeport on behalf of the parish. The Legion of Mary has been doing this since their founding, and they provided for us the structure, training, and experience to put it together. Teams of two (one “experienced” caller, and one “newbie”) called on 879 homes, speaking with 336 individuals and families. Our callers found this not nearly as daunting as they expected. Many people were receptive and glad to have a call, which established friendship (at least) with the parish. Three people came to Mass on Sunday after receiving a call on Saturday. Other calls found lapsed Catholics in need of reconciliation, shut-ins in need of sacraments, children needing instruction and initial sacraments, interest in the Vacation Bible School coming in July.

Here are some comments from those from St John’s who went out into the community.

*– I’ve been involved with many outreach efforts associated with various Christian organizations including several churches. However, I have never seen so many people effectively united in a singular purpose as I experienced on Saturday with the combined effort of parishioners of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church and members of the Legion of Mary.*

*– This was my first time going door to door for church. It was very helpful, and important, I think, to be paired with someone experienced. Most people were friendly, or became friendly after a minute or two of conversation. Those who were willing to talk were glad to accept the items we had to offer [information on SJB and on the Faith, rosaries, medals].*

*– My team made several very meaningful contacts with people looking for a ‘spiritual home’. It was very inspiring to see so many people working together.*

*– Saturday showed so many things. Among them, what some might consider a daunting undertaking, can actually be enjoyable, even fun! It also showed the unity among believers that exists in the Catholic Church and what God can do when willing hearts, go out, two by two and follow the commission Jesus gave before his Ascension.*

*– I thought the day was more than worthwhile – it is an essential thing for a church to do. There may be more ways to do it, but to be a real church, it must go out and find people and offer the Gospel. For us, I think the door to door is a very good method for several reasons.*

- 1. Going door to door means we aren’t being selective about whom we reach out to, except by their location of residence. Our mission may state a particular interest in groups such as unhappy Anglicans or Protestants who are looking for catholicity, but we want to include the unchurched, and anyone that God wants to draw, and I think that is good for us and for those outside our church. We aren’t looking to just reproduce ourselves.*
- 2. There are many in Bridgeport who have given up on church, who might by sorrowing without it. They might just have an open ear to a personal invitation from us.*
- 3. We’re new in Bridgeport. While we are still new is a good time to take advantage of that reason to introduce ourselves.*
- 4. It worked the first time. People came to Sunday Mass as a result.*
- 5. We have – I hope we will continue to have – the help of the Legion of Mary, who seemed like a large group of very willing people. Having their help a few more times could add life to both SJB and Sacred Heart.*
- 6. My experience on Saturday gave me the sense that doing this again would be healthy for our parish. I think it would strengthen our bonds to do it together.*
- 7. Jesus did it this way. He sent his disciples out in pairs.*

*In general, Evangelism is a good habit for a church to make. Our present congregation is still pretty new in its present configuration, and it is a good time to set our character for the future. To be evangelistic will help prevent us from becoming insular and fascinated with ourselves, our music, our liturgy, and other aspects of our life which could almost take on the character of idolatry if they aren't offered to others and God. The evangelism we did on Saturday seemed good for my soul. I'm guessing that people who do it find it to be a blessing that keeps on blessing.*

We will be following up on the needs which we uncovered in the days ahead. We will also be doing this again (we haven't covered all of Bridgeport yet), and I hope more people from SJB will be able to be involved. Clearly the 13 who went were glad they did, and found it worthwhile on various levels. Talk to them. If we can make outreach a habit – part of our identity – we can assure that SJB will not become ingrown and concerned only for ourselves. That of course would be devastating to our souls (since it is contrary to Christian charity), as well as to our common life. While all those involved have my heartfelt thanks, special recognition goes to Don Taggart and Edel and Steve Lukens, who did the heavy lifting of getting everything set up.

### **Saint Aelred's**

In thinking about outreach, the Pastoral Council raised the question whether SJB should be offering spiritual support to one of the newer and smaller communities of the Ordinariate. We approached Bishop Lopes, and he agreed that this is a wonderful idea, and suggested that we partner with St Aelred's in Athens, Georgia. This is a new community, overseen by Deacon Gregory Tipton. Deacon Tipton is to be ordained a priest the end of this month, and the community will then begin weekly Sunday morning Masses. Here is what he has to say by way of introduction:

*St. Aelred Catholic Community was founded on the Feast of St. Francis two years ago. We were just a few families and friends who were committed to worshipping in the beauty of holiness in The Daily Eucharist, The Daily Office, and befriending the poor. We became increasingly convinced of the truth of the Catholic Church through these practices and slowly began a pilgrimage across the Tiber. We came over with 12. Since then we've had some move away, picked up some new people, and had a few babies since becoming Catholic – so we're sitting around 20-22 people.*

*I currently teach theology and philosophy at a local independent Catholic High School. Upon ordination I'll celebrate Mass for the school, celebrate 4 or 5 masses a week at St. Joseph, as well as the Ordinariate form for Saint Aelred.*

*We currently meet every 4th week at 3:30 PM for the Ordinariate Form as celebrated by a visiting priest while I serve as deacon. We also have Evening Prayer M-F at 4:30 and on Wednesdays we have a bigger turn out and all gather for a meal afterwards at someone's house. We also gather on Sundays for Second Evensong and to catechize the children for First Confession, Communion, and for Confirmation.*

*As of my ordination we'll be Saint Aelred Catholic Church. We'll have a weekly Sunday Mass at 10:00 AM at the St. Joseph School Chapel followed by Adult Formation. We hope to quickly grow at St. Joseph's and to begin discussing renting a place of our own. But time will tell. The clergy and people of St. Joseph have been extremely warm, welcoming, and supportive of our goal to starting a new Catholic parish in town. We have several families who are interested in joining and some who are interested in coming to see our Mass once it's on a normal Sunday schedule. Pray for us!*

Given the distance, we will not be able to visit each other very often, though if any of you find yourselves in Atlanta, Athens is not far. I will add Deacon Tipton and St Aelred's to our Sunday intercessions, and hope you will pray for them as well. I will share with them what goes on in Bridgeport, which will give them a sense of how God has blessed us and gotten us where we are now. As we share each other's life in fraternal charity, both congregations will be strengthened.

### **Parish Dinner**

The annual Parish Dinner is scheduled for Friday in the Octave of Pentecost, June 14, 6:30 at St Helena's on Route 202 in Blue Bell. The parish has a catering operation, the Empress Room, as part of their facilities. Reservations are due by this Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **Blessed Nicholas Konrad**

We are in for a special treat when we celebrate our Patronal Feast on Sunday, June 30. Dr George Isajiw will be our guest speaker at an adult forum during coffee hour. He will tell us about the life and martyrdom of his grandfather, Blessed Nicholas Konrad, a Ukrainian Catholic priest murdered by the KGB in 1941 as the Nazis were about to move in to his town in Ukraine. Dr Isajiw is a Knight of Malta, and physician in general practice in Delaware County. The story is a fascinating one, and I am grateful to Dr Isajiw for coming to share it with us. Don't miss it. (For coffee hour, this is pot luck Sunday: please let Lisa Livezey know what you are bringing.)

## Calendar

June 7 & 28, Youth Group, 7 p.m.

June 12, Patricians adult discussion group for Catholics; this month: Why Chastity? Embracing the Virtue, Choosing Eternity. 6:45 p.m.

June 14, Parish Dinner at the Empress Room, St Helena's Catholic Church, Blue Bell, 6:30; reservations due by June 9

June 18-21, No weekday Masses

June 30, Patronal Feast: the Solemnity of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist; also special adult forum on Blessed Nicholas Konrad, presented by his grandson, Dr George Isajiw, KM

July 22-26 – Vacation Bible School, 9-2 for grades 1-8; 7-9 p.m. for high school

Yours faithfully,

Fr David Ousley

