

THE PHILADELPHIA ORDINARIATE POST

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

WWW.SJBRIDGEPORT.ORG

502 FORD STREET, BRIDGEPORT, PENNSYLVANIA 19405

215-247-1092

November, 2017

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

Annually the clergy of the Ordinariate gather with Bishop Lopes for a week. This year we met at a retreat center in Los Angeles operated by a group of “active” Carmelite nuns (some Carmelites are contemplative, like St Therese of Lisieux, and do not engage in active ministries such as this retreat house). It is a traditional community which seems to be thriving, and they took very good care of us.

Three or four of the novices and postulants served at the meals – keeping the buffet stocked, clearing our dishes, and generally making sure we had everything we needed. One of the things which struck us was that they were always smiling. They seemed to genuinely enjoy what there were doing, even though waiting tables is not (I would think) a source of joy in itself. What’s going on? It is of course possible that their Novice Mistress ordered them to smile or else. But I think that unlikely – the cheerfulness seemed genuine and not put on.



So could it be that they were actually enjoying what they were doing? Not just when we said something nice, but constantly? Well, why not? Suppose what they understood themselves to be doing was not just clearing dirty dishes, but doing what Jesus had given them to do. Suppose they were acting out the love they have for the Beloved. Doing something to please the Beloved can be joyful, no matter what it is. Such is certainly true on the human level – young lovers find it pleasant to do loving things for each other. And since being a nun is often conceived as being married to Christ (see I Timothy 5:11-12), waiting tables could well be the way the novices expressed their love for their Lord.

If this is what the novices were doing, then it is an example for the rest of us. If we do everything for the love of Christ, then everything can be a source of joy for us. This is true even if the task itself is unpleasant. It is a matter of how we define what we are doing: are we washing dishes, or are we loving our Beloved by doing the dishes?

This is true even if we are suffering – justly or otherwise. Jesus tells us in the Sermon on the Mount (at the end of the Beatitudes), “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad.” Rejoice: joy is possible even in the midst of unjust suffering. Why? Because we show our love for Christ by our suffering. We love Him so much that we want to show our love for Him in every way. Suffering willingly and joyfully is a definitive demonstration of love. Our young lovers will take it as proof, even more than words and promises: when one is willing to suffer for the other, love is unmistakable and real. So: whatever you do, whatever you suffer, do it out of love for Jesus. Suffering is still suffering. But even in the midst of the pain, there can be joy. And you can do what you have to do with joy, whatever it is, and however it turns out. Love is the key to joy.

Mount Calvary, Baltimore

There is exciting news about one of our neighboring Ordinariate parishes in Baltimore. Mount Calvary Church is to be erected as a canonical parish (as SJB was last year), and Fr Albert Scharbach is to be instituted as the first Pastor. Bishop Lopes will be visiting Mount Calvary for the event on Saturday, November 11th, at 4 p.m. In addition, he will be consecrating the altar, so this is an opportunity to witness this rare ritual. All are welcome. I hope our folk will be able to make the trip to support our brethren in this joyous and significant milestone in their parish life – and in the life of the Ordinariate. I know some rides are available: check in at coffee hour this Sunday.

SJB Mission

After considerable reflection, the parish pastoral Council has adopted a summary statement of our mission at St John the Baptist: “*Our mission is to know Christ; to spread His Gospel; to serve Him in His people; to pray with Him and labor with Him that His Church may be One; and to worship God in the Anglican Tradition in the communion of the Catholic Church.*” I urge you to

take some time to think about this. The statement will serve as a touchstone for our decisions about future activities and programs, and will help us focus on the things that are most important. It will also help others to understand what we are about. After you have had some time to reflect, I will offer some comments of my own.

Our Mass at the Cathedral Basilica

I'm grateful that many of you joined in the Mass for the feast of Blessed John Henry Newman at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul in Philadelphia on October 9th. If you were there you know that the Mass went well, with some 180 in attendance. The organist, choir and schola were in good form for the music, the acolytes attentive and reverent, Frs Scharbach and Bergman served ably as deacon and subdeacon of the Mass, Bishop McIntyre gave us a fine sermon, worthy of Cardinal Newman (and considerably shorter than he would have given!).

We were able to live-stream the Mass on our parish Facebook page, and the video is currently available on our web site. In this way, we were able to reach an audience far beyond those present at the Mass. I did not recognize the majority of those in the congregation – which means that they are mostly new to the Ordinariate Form of the Mass in Philadelphia. Since raising the profile of the Ordinariate and the Ordinariate Mass liturgy was a secondary purpose for the event (the primary purpose being the worship of God), we can deem it a success. We have accepted an invitation from the Rector of the Cathedral, Fr Gill, to do it again next year. This event is something that is impossible without the combined efforts of many, many people (Bishop McIntyre, the clergy, acolytes, organist, choir, schola, ushers, cathedral sacristans – and the faithful in the pews). You all have my thanks!

Ordinariate Clergy Assembly

What else happened in Los Angeles last week (besides our being well fed and prayed for by the Carmelites)? The Bishop shared with us a good bit of information on administration and finances of the Ordinariate. Suffice it to say that the Ordinariate is a very lean organization, especially when compared to the typical American diocese. There is no great bureaucracy: there are only five employees, all of whom wear multiple hats. (This means that we should all be patient when we need to deal with administrative things at the chancery.) The presentation helped us to know who does what. We also had almost two days of retreat, though not silent. Archbishop Augustine DiNoia, OP, a senior official of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome, gave us much to consider in his excellent addresses. Bishop Lopes also wanted to discuss with us the practice of confirmation in the Ordinariate. The age for confirmation and the understanding of the sacrament are varied in the United States, and he is looking towards establishing some consistency within the Ordinariate, and wanted to hear his priests on the subject first. Of course, we also had Mass each day, with visits from the Archbishop of Los Angeles, and the Bishop of Orange (thus four bishops, including two archbishops!). And not least, we had time with one another, which is both encouraging and fruitful for us as priests.

Quiet Day

November 26th is the Feast of Christ the King, the last Sunday of the church year, and the first Sunday in December (the 3rd) is the First Sunday of Advent, when we begin our preparation for Christ's coming at Christmas, and for His Second Coming at the Last Great Day. As is our custom, we will offer a Quiet Day to assist in the Advent preparation for our Lord's Coming: Saturday, December 2nd, 9-2. This is the day before Advent starts, so it is technically a pre-Advent Quiet Day, but the purpose is the same: to take some time with no other purpose than to be with Jesus. We let go of our usual daily cares for a few hours, to put ourselves in His hands, and enjoy some quiet intimacy with Him. In short: to enjoy the Beloved. It might even give us the leisure to think about how we might do everything as an act of love.

Most of us need some structure to manage quiet, lest we be overwhelmingly distracted. Likewise some instruction can be useful. The day begins with Mass at 9, and we provide breakfast afterward. Then the rest of the day is quiet (no talking amongst ourselves), with three addresses and opportunity for confession. The day concludes with a period of Adoration and Benediction. It is open to all and you are welcome for all or part of the day. Sandwich makings will be provided, or bring your own lunch.

In November

The **Patricians** Adult Discussion Group, moves to Wednesday night, November 8th. This month the topic is Purgatory. The group, sponsored by the Legion of Mary, is intended to help Catholics better understand and articulate their faith, and is not limited to parishioners of SJB. Bring your friends from other parishes! 7-9 p.m.

On the Twenty-Second Sunday after Trinity, November 12th, we will **receive into the communion of the Catholic Church** two soon-to-be former Anglicans at the ten o'clock Mass. David Reavill many of you will recognize, since he has been attending Mass at SJB since last spring. The other, Stuart Whitaker, will not be as familiar: he is on active duty in the Navy, currently based in Norfolk. He was confirmed as an Anglican at Good Shepherd, and sought us out, there being no Ordinariate community in Norfolk. Both have completed their catechesis, which we did on-line. Come to welcome them, and celebrate with them.

Thanksgiving Day is on November 23rd. Mass – the Great Thanksgiving – is at 10 a.m. Why not come and give formal thanks to God, who is the Source of all blessings, before going off to your turkey? There will be no 6 p.m. Mass on Thanksgiving.

The Sunday **Adult Forum** series on the Family continues. The next session deals with the family as the domestic church. It is during coffee hour on November 19th.

The **Thrift Shop** continues its mission of service on Tuesdays and Saturdays, 10-3. Our thanks goes to Raynor Sherlock, Charles Dickenson-Marks, Donna Era, Joy Converse, Tom O'Connell, Therese Rawson, Esther Parks, and Beth Ousley!

Thanks also to the faithful who instruct our younger ones in the **Sunday School**: Leslie Altena, Pedie Hill, Angela Johnson, and Wendy Ewing.

Yours faithfully,

Fr David Ousley