

Parish News

Here is your weekly update. There are also attachments for this week.

First Communion May 5th

The Parish has 23 children who will be making their First Communion next Sunday at the 11AM Mass

Parish Festival

Parish Festival is set for August 2-4

There will be the flea market for 3 days

Polish Kitchen Sunday August 4th

Fried Dough, basket raffle, and regular raffle

Fried Dough Sale

Knights of Columbus will be selling fried dough

Sunday April 28th 7:30am to sold out

\$200 each of 3 for \$5.00

50th Anniversary of Ordination -Rev. John Buehler

Sunday May 5th @ 11am Mass Historical Old St. John's Church -Utica

Reception Hart's Hill In 1-4pm

\$35 Buffet Dinner with Cash Bar

For details call or go to St. John's website

Stewardship-

Operating expenses for the Parish on a weekly basis are \$6,200.00 Collection.

Stewardship for April 14, 2024 \$7129.00

Hope Appeal

2nd Collection at weekend Masses is for the Hope Appeal and will continue in order for the Parish to reach the 2024 Goal

Goal \$38,468.00 Received to date \$27,488.02

Parish Giving-

The Parish is pleased to introduce "Enhancing Stewardship through Electronic Funds Transfer. It is convenient no more searching for a checkbook or Sunday morning stops at the ATM. To excess simply Log on the parish website www.sacredheart-saintmary.org and click on the Parish Giving Log and follow the easy registration instructions. It is Secure.

Events at other Parishes in our area

Please remember we are all a Catholic Community and need to support each other.

Youth Ministry Nights

The Senton Center/Mary Mother Savior Parish

Monday April 29th will be at from 6:30pm-8:00pm @ the Trampoline Park in New Hartford

Save the Date

St. Anthony and St Agnes Festival

June 7-8pm

Faith doesn't exempt you
from problems.
It gives you the strength to
get through them.

www.fb.com/TheLordMyShepherd



It is hard to believe that this Sunday is the last class for this year's Faith Formation. There will be an ice cream social for the children to celebrate the end of the year.

Let give many thanks for the wonderful Catechetics who shared their faith with your children, Laurie. Schoen, Mary Patterson, Sheila Biamonte, Lucy Patterson, Chris Fedor and Elizabeth Wells as well as aides Hanna Sook, Alyssa Sook, Isabella Sook

I will continue my weekly newsletter with the families which will have the weekly Sunday Gospel reading for the family.

I'm proud to announce that Hanna Sook will be attending Steubenville in July from our Parish. She has assisted the Faith Formation for the past 2 years as an aide. She has attended the Monday night teen nights and has grown in her faith. She will be making her confirmation on June 4th.

While the faith formation program for 2023 -2024 please remember that your child faith does not end with these classes. Share your faith with your children until the 2024-2025 year begins in September. Attending Mass is a wonderful way to continue your family faith journey

There will be the 1 week summer Totus Tuus program and Mary Mother Savior Parish. More information to follow on this. Also Teen nights will be again at Sacred Heart. St Mary's in July. More information to follow.



Sacrament of Reconciliation: Will be offered the first Wednesday of every month after the 12:15 Mass.

Saturday 4pm

Sunday's

7:30am 9AM and 11AM

Weekdays 12:15 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Friday.

There will no Mass on Thursday

Let's remember that as Catholics, the importance of attending Sunday Mass. At Mass we stand at mystically at the foot of the cross and witness for ourselves the same self-sacrifice of Jesus, in an unbloody manner. Mass is a celebration of this sacrifice. It is the active participation of all that come together in the place of worship.

5th Sunday of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 9:26-31

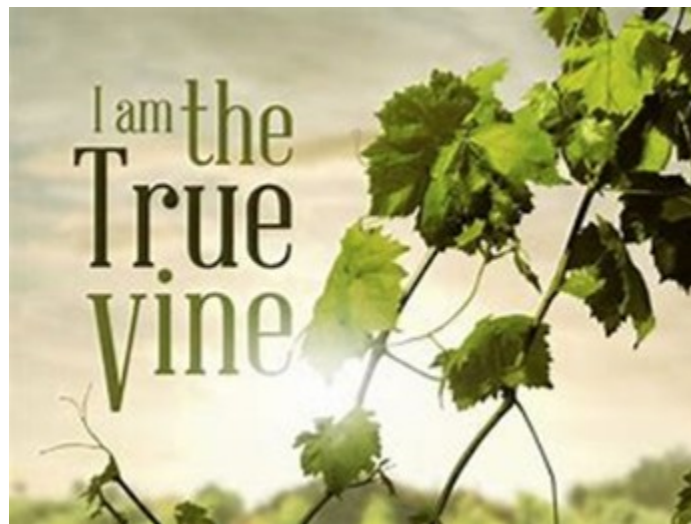
Responsorial Psalms: 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32

2nd Reading: 1 Jn 3:18-24

Gospel: Jn 15: 1-8

While these are wonderful reflections, please remember that they are not to be a substitute for the wonderful sermons of Father or Deacon Kirk at Mass.

As always, I try to find wonderful reflections for this week's Gospel reading. I let the Holy Spirit guide me. While this one is a bit long, the Holy Spirit lead me to share with everyone. Powerful



I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

JOHN 15:5

“Apart from me,” Jesus tells us in today's gospel reading, “you can do nothing.”

This may not seem true, at first blush. After all, there are many people doing many good things apart from Jesus – worthwhile things, for their families, communities, and world. But they are not us. And we are not trying to do *good* things – we are trying to do *Jesus* things. We are trying to help usher in God's loving kingdom. What could be more important than that? But we cannot do that apart from Jesus. We cannot be the people that God is calling us to be, individually or as a church, apart from Jesus. In fact, we cannot do anything truly worthwhile for God and the world God loves, apart from Jesus.

This is the simple truth we are being reminded of today. That apart from Jesus, we can do nothing that we will really care about, as his followers, in the end. Nothing.

A.W. Tozer, an American Christian pastor and writer, puts it this way: *“I guess my philosophy is this: Everything is wrong until God sets it right.”* Everything is wrong, when we are trying to serve God, until God makes it right.

And Martin Luther, in a prayer that I have posted where I robe for worship, and that I pray before every worship service, concludes his sacristy prayer this way: *“Use me as your instrument — but do not forsake me, for if ever I should be on my own, I would easily wreck it all.”*

Yes, I would. On my own, I would easily wreck it all. And so would you. This is the simple truth lying at the heart of today’s gospel reading.

So, how do we make sure that we are not on our own, that we are not doing anything apart from Jesus? He tells us: *“Abide in me.”* Abide in Jesus. Just as he abides in us. Those who abide in Jesus bear much fruit. That’s it. That’s the answer. Abide in Jesus.

But, we might ask, how do we do that? How do we abide in Jesus? The answer is not some great mystery – it is exactly what we have always been taught, what the people of God have always tried to do, throughout the centuries, in order to abide in Jesus:

Daily prayer, spending time with God’s Word, and weekly worship.

This has always been the way that Christians have sought to abide in Jesus. And there is nothing in this world that has changed that. It still comes down to daily prayer, spending time with God’s Word, and weekly worship. Let me say a little more about each of these.

Daily Prayer

First, daily prayer. Each and every day, turn back to God in prayer. Pray in the morning, before meals, at bedtime, and whenever you feel yourself slipping away from Jesus. Pray when you are in trouble. As the writer Isaac Singer famously put it, *“I only pray when I’m in trouble, but I’m in trouble all the time.”*

But you don’t have to pray the Divine Office to pray daily. A short “arrow prayer” is often enough. An arrow prayer is one of those short phrases or sentences that we send to heaven. A quick little prayer that we send to God. It could be a verse of scripture, or it could be a simple plea for help. Do this throughout the day, and you will find yourself abiding in Jesus.

Spending Time with God’s Word

But also important is spending time with God’s Word. God’s Word feeds our prayers, and our souls, with bread that lasts. We are not meant to live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. And where do we find these words? In the Bible. The Word of God. Daily manna for our souls. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer put it, *“Every day in which I do not penetrate more deeply into the knowledge of God’s Word in Holy Scripture is a lost day for me. I can only move forward with certainty upon the firm ground of the Word of God.”* There are lots of different ways to spend time daily with God’s Word. The only wrong way is not to do it at all.

Weekly Worship

Daily prayer, spending time with God's Word, and then: weekly worship. If we want to abide in Jesus, all three of these are essential. Including what we are doing right now. Here at church, or at home, but worshipping each week. This is essential if we are to abide in Jesus. No matter how good our week has been, and how faithful we have been in daily prayer and spending time with God's word, we tend to slip away from Jesus. There is just too much going on in this world, and in our life, for it to be otherwise. By the end of the week, we need to reset ourselves spiritually. And we do this by remembering the sabbath day and keeping it holy. We do this by worshipping together.

The Fruit of the Spirit

These three are the keys to abiding in Jesus. But here is a follow-up question: how do we know when we are abiding in Jesus well?

When you go to a doctor for a physical, there are certain numbers that tell your doctor how you are doing physically. Your blood pressure, for example, your temperature, your heart rate, etc. These are indicators of your physical health.

So, are there indicators of your spiritual health? The answer is yes. We can look at the fruit that we bear when we abide in Jesus. *"Those who abide in me,"* Jesus tells us, *"and I in them bear much fruit."*

And the good news is that we have a list of fruit that we bear when we abide in Jesus. Paul gives us this list in [Galatians 5](#), in what he calls the "fruit of the Spirit." Remember them? They are: *"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."* Nine fruit of the Spirit that are indicators of our spiritual health. They are the fruit that we bear when we abide in Jesus. Let me take a quick walk through them.

Love is first, as it should be. Those who abide in Jesus are filled with love, for God, for all of God's children, for God's creation, even for their enemies. *"God is love,"* we read in [1 John 4](#), *"and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them."* This is why love is the first and most important indicator of our spiritual health, of whether we are abiding in Jesus.

But then there is joy. Not happiness, but joy. Those who abide in Jesus are filled with joy. It's simple, really. When we are not experiencing joy in life, it is an indicator that we need more Jesus. More daily prayer, more of God's Word, more weekly worship, more time with God's people. More Jesus. Who gives us joy, and peace.

Are you experiencing the peace of God? The peace that surpasses all understanding? The peace that comes only from abiding in Jesus?

Or, how about patience, the next fruit of the Spirit? We certainly live in an impatient world, don't we? But Christians should be, of all people, the most patient. Not because we decide to be, or because we think that God wants us to. No. We are patient because we are abiding in Jesus.

And we are kind, the next fruit. Christians are not just loving, but kind. And there is a difference, don't you think? When we are faithfully abiding in Jesus, we are filled with kindness.

And, Christians are generous. When we are abiding in Jesus, we have confidence that God will take care of us, and so we can afford to be generous.

Christians are faithful; literally, full of faith. We trust in God. We have faith in Jesus. And this gives us a lightness of spirit that is noticeable to those around us. God will provide. What have we to fear?

We are also gentle, or meek, just as Jesus was meek. This does not mean that we are doormats, but that we want to serve God, to be led by Jesus. We don't want or need to be in control. We know that God is. And so, we can be meek, and gentle, when we are abiding in Jesus.

And finally: Self-control. We are in control of our passions and appetites. Not through willpower. But through abiding in Jesus.

Just as with all of the fruit of the Spirit, we don't *will* our way to them. We don't *work* our way to them. They are not works, they are fruit. Which is an important distinction. Just like a tree, we don't bear more fruit by working harder, but by planting our roots deeper. By abiding in Jesus. That is how to bear fruit for Jesus, and to help to usher in God's loving kingdom.

So, how are you doing spiritually? When you look at these fruits of the Spirit, what are they telling you? This is a simple way to check whether we are abiding in Jesus or not.

Closing

Apart from Jesus we can do nothing. Everything is wrong until God makes it right. On our own, we easily wreck it all. We need Jesus. We can't bear fruit without him. We can't do anything in this world that God is calling us to do without Jesus. Individually. Or as a congregation.

As we begin to come out of this pandemic and have more and more activities, there is nothing more important for us to do than to abide in Jesus, so that we can bear his fruit.

"My Father is glorified by this," Jesus concludes this gospel reading, *"that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."*

Let us glorify the Father. Let us bear much fruit. As individuals, and as a congregation. Let us be known for our love, and our joy, and our peace, and our patience, kindness, generosity,

faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Let us bear this fruit, in the only way that we can: By abiding in Jesus. Amen.

This week's Saints of the week:

The saints are models of human excellence, perfected by the life of Christ and the communication of his Spirit. They demonstrate in their lives how to really live and how to really die. They consistently point to the horizon of love which leads to the fulfillment of all human desire: eternal communion with the Holy Trinity.

April 29th, Memorial of St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church, May 2nd
Memorial of St. Athanasius Bishop and Doctor of the Church; May 3rd Feast of Sts. Philip and James, Apostles



Children's Sermon: The True Vine (John 15:1-8)

I'm sure you all know the song, "This Little Light of Mine." I'm going to sing it, and I want you to sing along. While we do, I'll hold up this light and shine it all around. (Start to sing the song, but stop when you notice that the light isn't shining.) What's wrong? My light isn't shining. (Wait until someone notices that it isn't plugged in.) Oh, the problem is, my light isn't plugged in. (Plug the lamp in).

Now that we're plugged in, let's try it again. (Lead kids in singing.)

That was much better with the lamp shining brightly. It's pretty hard for a light to shine when it isn't connected to the power source. Actually, it's not just hard; it's impossible!

It reminds me of something Jesus said in the Bible. He told His disciples a story to help them understand why it's important to stay connected to Him. But He didn't use a lamp. In His example there was a grapevine. A vine is a plant with a lot of branches growing out from it. The branches have fruit on them. So grapevines have grapes on them.

Think about a branch that's been broken off of a tree or a vine. (Hold up the tree branch). What happens to it? It withers up and dies. It can't ever have fruit on it again; it's not good for anything except firewood. (Discard broken tree branch).

Jesus said, "I am the vine and you are the branches. If you remain in me, you will have much fruit, but apart from me, you can do nothing." (John 15:1-8) Jesus wants us to produce fruit. Good fruit, like kindness, generosity, and faithfulness. Most of all, He wants us to love others as He has loved us.

But we can't do it on our own. Just as the lamp must be plugged in before its light can shine, and just as the branches must be connected to the vine before they can produce fruit, you and I must stay connected to Jesus to produce the good fruit that God expects of us.

Dear God, help us remember that we need to stay plugged into Jesus if we're going to produce the kind of fruit You expect. In Jesus' name, amen.

Weekly Prayers

Blessing. As we continue our Easter season, let keep focused toward the Risen Christ





Diocese of Syracuse

3) From the Catholic Schools Office:

Save the Date: On Monday, June 17, 2024 we will hold our **3rd Annual Light A Child's Future Charity Golf Tournament at [Turning Stone Resort](#)**. This exciting event benefits Catholic Schools scholarships. We strive to raise much needed funds for our Light a Child's Future Scholarship program, which enables economically disadvantaged students to attend Catholic Schools in our diocese. Did you know that 65% of our students rely on financial aid or scholarship support to attend our schools? Your support will directly aid underprivileged students, ensuring their participation in a faith-centered community focused on promoting academic excellence.

Please join us:

- [Serve as a Sponsor](#) or [Register as an individual or foursome team\(s\)](#)
Sponsorships begin at \$500 - Click [here](#) for a complete list
- **Promote the Golf Tournament in your Parish**
See attached flyer for bulletin boards and Parish website

Event Details:

Light A Child's Future Charity Golf Tournament.

Monday, June 17 2024

Shenandoah Golf Club, Verona NY

18 holes of golf, rain or shine

11:00-1:00 Registration and grab-and-go lunch

1:00 Shotgun start

5:30 Cocktail hour

6:30-9:00 Celebration Dinner

Lynn M. Springer

Director of Faith Formation

Sacred Heart/St Mary's

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