

From the Deacon's Desk

### **Art & Environment:**

Thank you to Diane Courter and Joyce Noyes for the beautiful "Back to School" display in the back of church and around the altar. Last Sunday it was wonderful seeing so many students of all ages come forward for the back to school backpack blessing prayer. We will also do similar blessings for students before exam week and other milestones in the student's school year.

### **Living the Eucharist:**

After last year's Alpha Program, parishioners were asking what was next. As a way to pick up where Alpha left off, every year we will try to promote an Alpha 201 type of program and focus on something specifically Catholic for Catholics.

We will also do Alpha again beginning in Lent 2018 for those who did not participate in Alpha last year, and the Whole Community Catechesis program once a month is also a great way to continue on in your spiritual journey into adult Catholicism.

**Living the Eucharist** is a dynamic, parish-based program designed to help revitalize parish life and mission through a more profound experience of Sunday Mass. It helps the entire parish—adults, teens, and families—grow in their Catholic faith and live more fully as missionary disciples of Jesus.

We Catholics are always in need of opportunities to renew our experience of the Sacrament of the Eucharist as a mystery to be **believed**, a mystery to be **celebrated**, and a mystery to be **lived**.

**Living the Eucharist** renews and heightens parishioner involvement in the Sunday Eucharist, helps parishioners connect the celebration of the Eucharist more closely with the mission of Jesus Christ and the Church, and inspires them to live more intentionally as missionary disciples of Jesus during the week.

Living the Eucharist will have a similar format as the Alpha program and have a meal, followed by a presentation and group discussion. **There are many goals in Living the Eucharist program:**

- Learn about the true meaning of the Mass.
- Better understand the rituals and symbols of the Eucharist.
- Discover new ways to make the Sunday Mass come alive during the week.
- Grow in your relationship with Jesus Christ together with your fellow parishioners.

**More information on this program will be following soon. Since we will once again provide free meals for both Alpha 2018 and Whole Community Catechesis, we are asking that those who want to participate in Living the Eucharist bring a dish to pass.**

**Children's Church:**

The Church recognizes that young children have special needs when celebrating the Liturgy. Our parish offers Children's Liturgy of the Word (called Children's Church) during the 9:30 a.m. Mass, and for the most part, Carol Gall is the only person who leads the children's reflection. Carol has asked that there be other catechists to help her share this ministry. Rather than Carol do it every week, she'd like to do it twice a month, with one or two people being responsible for the other weeks.

During Children's Church, the kids leave the assembly to hear and pray the Gospel in age-appropriate ways. They then return to their families to continue the Liturgy of the Eucharist. If you'd like more information on what is required, please see Carol or Jerry.

**October is Respect Life Month:**

We are called to uphold the dignity of life from the moment of conception to natural death. This includes respect for the unborn, the disabled, the elderly, the prisoner, the poor, the post abortive and the vulnerable. **On Sunday, October 1 at 5:30 pm, Bishop Cistone will celebrate a Respect Life Mass at the Cathedral of Mary the Assumption.** All are welcome.

The Bishop will also celebrate a special **Mass of Remembrance for the Unborn** ("Let the Little Children Come to Me") **with a candle lighting to honor all babies who died in their mother's womb.** Parents and families grieving the loss of an unborn child, whether very recently or many years ago, are encouraged to attend. The Mass will be held at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Midland on October 19 at 7 pm.

Other events which promote Respect Life Month include the **Rachel's Vineyard Weekend Retreat** for those trying to heal from an abortion on November 10 through 12 2017, and a **Physician Assisted Suicide Seminar** on October 25 from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm at the Center for Ministry.

For more information on any of these events, please contact the parish office.