

From the Deacon's Desk

Happy Mother's Day!

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY TO ALL! Remember to get your chocolates before you leave church and enjoy your special day!

Clerical and Pastoral Assignments:

Most Reverend Joseph R. Cistone, bishop of Saginaw, announces the following clerical and parish assignments, effective July 2, 2018.

Reverend **Jerome Green**, newly ordained, from Pastoral Administrator, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Shepherd to Pastor St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, Reese and St. Frances Cabrini Parish, Vassar.

Deacon **Todd Lovas**, to Pastoral Administrator, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Shepherd.

Scripture Today:

Sometimes we Christians have a very literal way of imagining the scriptures. Jesus' Ascension does not necessarily mean that he literally floated up to heaven (although that is where his disciples were looking since they envisioned heaven as being "up there"), but that his disciples realized his continued presence among them took on a different form. In the Gospels we hear of the earthly Jesus alive and living with them in the flesh, and in Acts of the Apostles (heard throughout the Easter Season), we hear of the life of the early church after Jesus returned to the Father. The Acts of the Apostles alone places the Ascension forty days after Easter, and the Gospels place the ascension on the day of Easter; John writes of the "ascension" not as an event but as a new existence with the Father.

Jesus' Ascension is both an ending and a beginning. The physical appearances of Jesus are at an end; his revelation of the "good news" is complete, and now begins the work of the disciples to teach what they have learned and to share what they have witnessed. Like any beginning or transition in life, it is a moment of great uncertainty, confusion, and apprehension. As I begin a new journey myself, I take great comfort in this reality, and especially the knowledge that when Jesus calls us to mission, he promises to be with us every step of the way. And yet, what began with those few disciples has grown and flourished through the centuries.

The Church Jesus leaves to them is rooted not in buildings or wealth or formulas of prayer or systems of theology (isn't Pope Francis showing us this), but in faith nurtured in the human heart, a faith centered in joy and understanding that is empowering and liberating, a faith that gives us the strength and freedom to be authentic and effective witnesses of the Risen One, who is present among us always.

Christ entrusts to his disciples of every time and place the sacred responsibility of teaching others everything he has taught and revealed about the Father: God's limitless love, his unconditional forgiveness and acceptance of every person as his own beloved child, and our identity as God's sons and daughters and brothers and sisters to one another.

Christ also calls us to be witnesses of God's presence in our lives. He also asks us to bring into the lives of others his healing forgiveness and reconciliation to others. The words of Jesus addressed to his disciples on the mountain of the Ascension are also addressed to all of us. How are we doing in handing on to others the story that has been handed on to us about Jesus and his Gospel of love and compassion?

2018 Graduates:

All of those in the Parish who are graduating from high school or college this year are invited to join for a special Baccalaureate Mass on Sunday June 10th. Please call the office or talk to Mary Moomey and let us know who you are, so we can send you a special invitation and recognize you in our parish bulletin.

CSA:

Our Catholic Services Appeal will begin this weekend. You should have received a packet from the diocese in the mail. If you didn't, there are extras in our entries.

Funds collected from the C.S.A. provide for many valuable ministries and programs. Who benefits from the C.S.A.? Let me share just a few examples: The C.S.A. subsidizes the education of future priests, deacons, and lay ministers for the Church through Seminaries and the Center for Ministry. The C.S.A. helps the needy and provides for outreach and evangelization. The C.S.A. aids Catholic education, R.C.I.A., and youth ministries. The C.S.A. funds diocesan offices that serve as a resource for the parishes. If you or a loved one have ever gotten a marriage annulment, the costs were covered by the C.S.A.

The Catholic Services Appeal does so much, and the diocese provides ministries and programs that are beyond the means of parishes. I have been asked if C.S.A. dollars go toward lawyer and legal fees in clergy criminal investigations, and the answer is NO. Anyone, clergy or otherwise, who is charged with a crime is responsible for their own legal costs.

Every dollar that we raise above the target returns to our parish and we can use them to develop our future evangelization, whole community catechesis and youth ministry programs. Please be generous to the Catholic Services Appeal this year. Your annual pledge or gift is a blessing to the diocese, its parishes, and its people!