

The Work of the People  
*The Seventh Sunday of Easter*

Last Thursday we celebrated the Ascension of the Lord and have completed forty days of the fifty-day Easter celebration. Next week we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (the Greek “pente” indicating fifty). It is the Spirit that guided the closest followers of Jesus and the Spirit who guides the Church today. I call you to pray for the guidance of the Spirit as this local church, St. Anthony of Padua Parish, as well as the entire Diocese of Erie, goes through a time of transition.

Anne-Marie Welsh, the Director of Diocesan Communications for the Diocese of Erie, wrote an article last May summing up the status of the Pastoral Planning Process in the Diocese.

“It has been five years since the first phase of parish restructuring was implemented in the Diocese of Erie as a result of pastoral planning. At that time, through a series of mergers and partnerships, and after a significant process that included dialogue, feedback and refinement, the diocese reduced the number of its parishes from 117 to 96. ‘Change is never easy,’ says the Most Rev. Lawrence T. Persico, bishop of Erie. ‘But it’s encouraging to see that the majority of parishes have handled their transitions very well. The primary goal remains creating healthy, vibrant parishes where people can grow in their relationship with Christ.’

As Bishop Persico has said on numerous occasions, planning will be a way of life within the diocese going forward. To that end, a series of resources and options were created by diocesan administrators for those involved in a second phase of planning during which a number of parishes in several regions have been exploring the possibility of merging or partnering in the future. While not as public as the first-round effort, this second phase of planning has been transparent within the communities involved, including the parishes of St. Agatha, St. Brigid, and St. Mary of Grace in Meadville (in Crawford County), that have now come together as one: the Epiphany of the Lord Parish.

Recognizing that a number of parishes in need of planning next steps would benefit from a more structured approach, Bishop Persico now has introduced a third phase of pastoral planning. The national Meitler organization already has been engaged, first to update key data that will be useful for planning in three deaneries [Bradford Deanery, the Oil City Deanery, and the West Erie Deanery], and secondly, to outline the steps that need to be taken to bring plans to fruition.”

The planning process now involves the Clarion Deanery and will soon involve The Meadville Deanery. Those in my ordination class of 1975 have just celebrated our 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priestly ordination and, as I am, are moving toward retirement. Bishop Persico has already approved my retirement date of June 30, 2024.

Part of our reality is that priests are getting fewer in number and the projection is that within ten years there probably will be only 65 active priests in a diocese that was once served by over 200 priests.

There have been numerous economic and demographic changes since the founding of many of our parishes in mid-19<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Bishop Persico plans to engage the services of the Meitler organization to gather and analyze the data regarding these changes for *all* regions of the diocese to provide a factual basis for pastoral planning. The Bishop, priests, and the faithful are called to work together in this effort to build a strong and enduring future for the growth of the Catholic Church in North-west Pennsylvania

### READINGS FOR THE WEEK

**Monday: Acts 19:1-8/Jn. 16:29-33**

**Tuesday: Act 20:17-27/Jn. 17:1-11a**

**Wednesday: Acts 20:28-38/Jn. 17:11b-19**

**Thursday: Acts 22:30; 23:6-11/Jn. 17:20-26**

**Friday: Acts 25:13b-21/Jn. 21:15-19**

**Saturday: Acts 28:16-20, 30-31/Jn. 21:20-25**

**Sunday: Acts 2:1-11/1 Cor. 12:3b-7, 12-13/Jn. 20:19-23**

### CONFIRMATION

Confirmation will take place on Tuesday, May 23 at 7:00 pm at Epiphany of the Lord - St. Agatha Parish. The following will be making their Confirmation:

Rylie Braymer  
Lindsey Greco (St. Joseph, Sharon)  
Payton Leandro  
Sophia Mott  
Sydney Zilhaver

### SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (Corpus Christi)

On Sunday, June 11, the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, all clergy, religious and lay faithful are invited to participate in one of the regional Eucharistic Processions as part of the Eucharistic Revival which began a year ago.

Epiphany of the Lord, Meadville, will have Procession time at 2:30 pm with procession to St. Brigid and back, Benediction to conclude. The exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is following the 11:30 am Mass.

*“Our Father in heaven,  
set me apart and use me for your glory.”*

**WORSHIP**

Monday, May 22  
 8:00 am + Mary Mukina (Joan Rembielak)  
 Tuesday, May 23  
 8:00 am + Gary Parkin (Sue Parkin)  
 Wednesday, May 24  
 8:00 am + NO MASS  
 Thursday, May 25  
 8:00 am + Kathleen Nowak (Family)  
 Friday, May 26  
 8:00 am + Ron Yusavage (Joan Smith)  
 Saturday, May 27  
 4:30 pm + Susan VanWickler (Annette Kramer)  
 Sunday, May 28  
 8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION  
 Living & Deceased Parishioners  
 9:30 am + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA  
 Andrew & Stella Bialobocki (Harriet Dine)

**SOCIAL**

Faith Formation will be hosting a coffee and donut social to honor those students who have reached a Sacrament milestone. Please join us after the 9:30 Sunday mass on June 4th to meet and greet our special young people.  
 All are invited to share in fellowship and celebration.

**CALENDAR LOTTERY FUNDRAISER**

Please return all sold and unsold tickets before Wednesday, May 24, 2023. Additional tickets can still be purchased after week-end masses.

**A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE**

As Jesus appointed apostles he also appoints parents to represent Him in the family; "make disciples of your children, baptizing and teaching them all I have taught you. Don't worry, I am with you always."

**PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR**

Tuesday, May 23  
 After Mass - St. Anthony Novena  
 Saturday, May 27  
 3:30 - 4:15 pm - Confession  
 Sunday, May 28  
 AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION  
 Before Mass - Confession  
 AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA  
 After Mass - Confession  
 10:30 am - Faith Formation Classes

**VILLA MARIA-THON 5-K RUN AND 2-MILE WALK**

Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center will sponsor its 13th annual Villa Maria-thon 5-K Run and 2-Mile Walk on Saturday, June 3, 2023 at 9 am at Villa Maria Community Center in Villa Maria, PA. The event includes activities for the entire family! Go to [www.vmesec.org](http://www.vmesec.org) for registration and additional information. All proceeds from this event benefit the Center's youth and adult programs.

**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA ALTAR SERVERS**

Saturday, May 27 - 4:30 pm  
 Payton Leandro  
 Sunday, May 28 - 9:30 am  
 Max Marteeny

**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA**

Our patronal feast is celebrated on June 13 each year. This year we would like to celebrate our patron with Evening Prayer and a meal. We need someone to come forward to organize a committee to coordinate a simple meal (such as a tureen dinner). If you would like to be that person, please let Fr. Mark or Josie know. Thank you.

**ST. BERNADETTE MISSION STEWARDSHIP**

Offertory	\$375.00
Ascension	30.00
Candles	3.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$408.00</b>

**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA STEWARDSHIP**

Offertory	\$768.00
Maintenance	235.00
Candles	79.00
Ascension	10.00
CSA	500.00
Cash Giveaway	15.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,607.00</b>
Catholic Services Appeal	
Pledged: \$29,263.33    Paid: \$19,448.33	

**CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA**

**CHURCH NO.:**

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:**

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