

Welcome to...

*Our Lady Queen of the Americas
Parish*



A LETTER OF WELCOME FROM THE PASTOR

I want to welcome you who may be reading this packet of such valuable information about Our Lady Queen of the Americas Church. You will find so many important names, numbers, and explanations about the ministry of our parish here in Conneaut Lake.

I believe you will find the parish to be quite alive and well with so many opportunities to fulfill the mandate of Christ to establish the Kingdom here. There are liturgical ministries, social and service organizations, opportunities for faith formation and the deepening of our spiritual life and relationship to Jesus Christ.

I encourage you to read through this information and if the Lord draws you toward certain activities and opportunities here at the parish, please call the appropriate person or the parish office. Your participation in the activities of our parish will foster that spirit of welcome even more, and you will certainly begin to feel what it is like to be part of this family, the faith community of Our Lady Queen of the Americas.

There is invaluable information about the parish here as well – our history, our mission statement as a parish, our ministries here and beyond the parish buildings. Simply knowing more and more about the parish will also help you to “feel part” of the parish family more and more.

Once again, welcome to this introduction and information. We are simply trying to make Christ present among us – being His Hands, Feet, Eyes, and Heart. We attempt to do all this under the patronage of Our Lady, the Queen of the Americas. Welcome, and I look forward to our relationship: you becoming part of the parish – and the parish embracing you and your gifts.

Father David Carter

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

In union with
The Universal Church and the Diocese of Erie
the Parish Family of Our Lady Queen of the Americas Church
with faith in Jesus Christ
and the guidance of the Holy Spirit
serves the people of the Conneaut Lake area
by sharing God's Word and the Sacraments, and through Evangelization,
Education, Family and Community Life, and Service.
The mission of our parish
is to make known and advance God's plan of salvation
as revealed through the Catholic Church,
and to call forth the gifts of individuals,
so as to bring about the Reign of God in the hearts of all people.

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

Mass Times

Saturday evening at 5:00 PM
Sunday morning at 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM
Weekdays: Mon – Fri 8:00 AM Holy Mass
6:30 AM Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
6:45 AM Vigils
7:15 AM Lauds (Morning Prayer)
7:35 AM Holy Rosary
7:50 AM Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament
8:30 AM Confession

Holydays of Obligation

6:30 PM anticipated Mass
8:00 AM on the Holyday

Children's Liturgy of the Word

During 10:30 Mass from September through April – Kindergarten children through second grade

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Monday – Friday 8:30 AM
Saturday 3:30 – 4:30 PM
Anytime by appointment
Advent and Lent Reconciliation Services

Anointing of the Sick

Anytime by request

Holy Communion is taken to the sick and homebound on the first Thursday of each month or anytime by request

PARISH HISTORY

Msgr. Robert Toland (1891-1985) is the founding pastor of Our Lady Queen of the Americas Parish, a parish that has now grown to a little over 400 families. Our church changed from mission status, connected to St. Peter in Conneautville, to an independent parish on May 13, 1958. Mass had been celebrated at Conneaut Lake Park and at various community buildings for nearly 50 years before the structure of the church was completed in May of 1959. The original name of the church was Our Lady of the Lake, but was later changed to Our Lady Queen of the Americas (1956), with Our Lady of Guadalupe as our patroness.

Bishop Edward P. McManaman, auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Erie, dedicated the church on Sunday, May 17, 1959. The altar was consecrated on May 1, 1960 containing 1st class relics of St. Felicissimus and St. Prosperus. The design of the church is unique in that the folding doors and panels behind the altar may be opened in order to double the seating capacity, a necessity during the summer months.

The parish grounds include a small cemetery behind the church with statues of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Our Lady, and the Pieta. A small columbarium stands in the northwest corner of the cemetery for the reverent interring of ashes. There is also a Mary's Garden to the right of the entrance with many beautiful plants in honor of Mary. You will also find there a labyrinth for those who may wish to use this form of prayer and meditation.

On the east side of the cemetery we have erected a shrine with the Fourteen Stations of the Cross. Fr. John Murray replaced Msgr. Toland as pastor of OLQA in 1977 and Msgr. Edward Zeitler then led the parish as its third pastor from 1979-1985. Msgr. Toland passed away in 1985. Msgr. John Lucas was assigned as pastor in 1985 and served the parish until September of 1998 at which time Fr. Stephen Anderson was appointed the fifth pastor. Fr. Anderson passed away in March 2013. Fr. Jeffrey Lucas, the sixth and current pastor, was appointed in June of 2013.

The parish pursues prayerful and inviting Liturgies with hospitality as one of our main virtues. We welcome many visitors to the Lake and to the Park, especially during the summer months, and enjoy worshiping with them at our Liturgies. Our prayer overflows into ways of service in efforts at care and concern for one another. Our Religious Education program attempts to introduce and support the Faith among our young people throughout the year with various opportunities for retreat, service, and fellowship, as well as classroom experience. Many serve in various ministries throughout the parish: at and around the Altar, in the classroom and faith formation classes, in the Knights of Columbus, Altar Rosary Society, 55+ Club, Cursillo, Marriage Encounter, etc.

We pray that our efforts will always give God the greater honor and glory as we worship and serve together at this Church, dedicated to Our Lady, Queen of the Americas.

OLQA CONTACT INFORMATION

WE WELCOME ALL VOLUNTEERS, QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS OR CONCERNS.

GENERAL PARISH CONTACTS

OUR LADY QUEEN OF THE AMERICAS CHURCH
155 South 9th Street,
Conneaut Lake, PA 16316

Website: www.olqachurch.org

Phone 814-382-7252

Fax 814-382-9575

<i>Emails</i>	
Parish Secretary	olqaoffice@zoominternet.net
Pastor	olqapastor@zoominternet.net
Religious Formation	olqaeducation@zoominternet.net

FOR THE MOST CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL OTHER PARISH EMPLOYEES, GROUPS OR ANY OTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL THE MAIN PARISH NUMBER:

814-382-7252

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MAJOR FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

The “**300 Club**” is a remarkable fund raiser for the good of the parish. This program provides Our Lady Queen of the Americas Parish with extra funds for special parish projects. What a blessing this has been for our parish. There are only 300 members. A member buys a number from 001-300 on a first come, first serve basis. The numbers are NOT based on the PA lottery. Members contribute \$2.00 a week for 52 weeks. If you pay the whole year at one time dues are \$100. If you make payments, then dues are \$104. Prizes are: first Sunday of each month: \$200. The Sunday before Christmas: two \$250 prizes. Remaining 39 Sundays: \$100. Membership entitles you to a Banquet at the end of the year with \$2,375 given away in cash prizes. Parishioners, non-parishioners, summer parishioners, relatives and friends are welcome to join.

The **annual parish barbecue** is a long-standing fundraising effort and contributes in a major way to the good of the parish. This dinner is held on the first Sunday of August and has evolved in many ways. There are take-outs available and even a drive thru ordering booth behind the parish hall. During the dinner many prizes are also awarded – many theme baskets, instant bingo cards, 50-50 raffle, and other prizes as well. The dinner is a tremendous community building effort as all parishioners come together to make it happen. Working together for such a wonderful cause draws us together, provides a wonderful time of fellowship and joy, and assists the parish in magnificent ways.

The **annual Catholic Services Appeal** is a major boost to the finances of the parish and at the same time is our way of pledging stewardship and assistance to the services provided by the Diocese to our corner of NW PA. This appeal is a 10-month pledge and supports an identified project each year for the good of the parish. Catholic services which are supported through this appeal include the charitable efforts of the Diocese: education, religious education, Catholic charities, clergy education and assistance, food banks and pantries, adoption services, annulments, among other services. Our participation in this appeal is our way of personal and diocesan accountability and stewardship.

The “**Night at the Races**” is an annual fund raiser that provides Our Lady Queen of the Americas Parish with extra funds for special parish projects. For the price of admission, you are given dinner with wine and beer provided. There are many side boards that provide additional opportunities for winnings . Throughout the evening there are video horseraces that allow for bets. Parish members and outside businesses are provided the opportunity to sponsor horses and races. Parishioners, non-parishioners, summer parishioners, relatives and friends are welcome to enjoy the fun evening.

LITURGICAL MINISTRIES

Welcome! Liturgical ministry is an excellent opportunity to fulfill your baptismal call of service to one another. Our liturgies utilize the talents and gifts that God has given this community to the fullest extent. Whether participation is through “behind the scenes” preparation and planning or through a public role of service within the Mass, parishioner contributions help our liturgies to be truly life-giving celebrations. Please prayerfully consider joining one of these ministries.

If you would like to consider learning more about, or joining the Liturgical Minister team, please [click here](#) to submit your information and one of our Liturgical Minister coordinators will contact you.

Musicians/Cantors/Choir

Liturgical music is an integral part of our worship celebrations. The musical styles of our various choirs present a unique and spiritual element that enables our congregation to lift up their voices in praise. Although the various groups have different styles, different rehearsal times, different commitment levels, and different Mass schedules, they all strive toward a common goal: to lead the congregation in sung prayer and to glorify God through the music they each produce.

Extraordinary Ministers

Parishioners assist with the distribution of the Eucharist (Body and Blood) at weekday, weekend and Holy Day Masses. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (formerly known as Eucharistic Ministers) must be 18 years of age, have received the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Catholic Church and, if married, must be recognized by the Church.

Lectors

Lectors proclaim the Word of the Lord during the Liturgy and, when there is no Deacon present, the General Intercessions. A lector must have a passion for Scripture; an ability to interpret and understand Scripture; and, sufficient public speaking skills to proclaim the Word to the assembly. Training in the specifics of the ministry is provided throughout the year. Parishioners are trained to proclaim the Word of God at all Masses. Lectors for weekend and Holy Day Masses consist mainly of adults and high school students. Lectors are provided with a Lector Handbook to assist in their proclamation and pronunciation.

Altar Servers

Altar Servers offer service to God and the community by assisting the priest during Mass. The ministry is open to all youth of the parish who have made their First Communion and whose parents believe they are ready and responsible enough to be trained. Young men and women assist the Priest at the Altar for all weekend, Holy Day and other Masses as needed. Adults may also assist when school aged servers are not available. Training is held throughout the year.

Ushers

Ushers assist at each Sunday Mass, Holy Day Mass, and other special occasions as needed. The ushering staff is made up of adult men and women who are capable of directing crowd flow and movement, take up the collection, and assist those with special needs. Ushers may double as Hospitality Greeters.

Greeters

The men and women who make up the Hospitality Greeters are the first ministers one meets when they arrive at the church for any celebration. Their warm, friendly smile and welcoming handshake set the tone for the worship experience. A pleasant, outgoing personality is a important for the Sacred Heart greeters, who may also assist with and double as ushers at any given Sunday Mass or special occasion.

Funeral-Liturgy Team

The **Funeral Liturgy Team** is a group of parishioners trained to assist at funeral liturgies.

This consists of altar servers, lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, and ushers.

PARISH SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATION

AT OLQA WE HAVE A VARIETY OF GROUPS THAT MEET MANY NEEDS AND REQUIRE YOUR INVOLVEMENT. "MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK." PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING US IN ONE OR MORE OF THESE ACTIVITIES.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THESE GROUPS PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE

The **Altar Rosary Society's** purpose is to praise and honor the Blessed Virgin Mary and to secure her patronage by the recitation of the Rosary for the mutual spiritual benefit of all its members throughout the world. The members also provide services for the church, parish and parishioners whenever needed. Membership is open to all women of the parish eighteen years or older who are in good standing within the church and who are supportive of the purpose and ideals of the Altar Rosary Society. The meetings are held on the first Tuesday evening of every month except January and July. Care packages are sent through the kindness of the Altar Rosary Society to our parish college students.

The **55+ Club** is a social gathering of parishioners on the second Tuesday of each month in the parish hall. The group gathers at 12:30 PM and enjoys a luncheon together. Those who attend bring a tureen dish to share with other guests. The gathering is an attempt to simply gather and enjoy the fellowship and support of one another and to share a meal together. Anyone (55+ or thereabouts) is invited to come and share this time, friendship, and good food together.

The **Samaritans of Conneaut Lake Area, Inc.** is a non-profit organization and supported by the Ministerium of the Conneaut Lake area. The mission of the Samaritans is to provide Conneaut Lake area residents with the basics of food, clothing and shelter. Financial aid is available for emergency situations. Food is distributed on a bi-monthly basis in the Samaritan building located on the grounds of Our Lady Queen of the Americas. Opportunities are available for volunteering with the Samaritan Holy Ground Thrift Shop also located in the Samaritan building. Donations of non-perishable food, good used or new clothing and small household items are always welcome. Financial support comes through donations from area churches, organizations, businesses, individuals, and the Holy Ground Thrift Shop. The thrift shop is open Mondays – 5:30 until 7:30 PM and Thursdays 9:00 AM until 6:00 PM. Drop off hours are Mondays 9:00 AM until 12:00 noon and 5:30 PM until 7:30 PM. (The shop is usually open on Saturday mornings during the summer season from 9:00 AM until 12:00 noon.)

The **Knights of Columbus** is a national organization founded in 1882 by Fr. Michael J. McGivney with chapters based in parishes or groups of parishes. The Knights seek to further the mission of the Catholic Church by conducting charitable, social and educational activities in their church and community. The Our Lady Queen of Americas/St. Phillips chapter meets each month at the Msgr. Robert Toland Park. The organization is open to all adult Catholic men over the age of 18 in the area.

The **Sister Parish Program** is a cooperative program between the Diocese of Erie and the Archdiocese of Yucatan, Mexico. Our mission is to respect other people and their culture, make their concerns our own, and to share with them the Gospel riches we have received. In 2010, OLQA renewed a sister parish relationship with **St. Anthony of Padua Parish** in Tekit, Mexico. All interested parishioners are invited to participate.

The **Funeral Dinner Committee** prepares and serves meals after our funeral liturgies for families who so wish. This ministry is an invaluable source of support to a grieving family after the burial of their loved one. The parish and committee provide a comforting and delicious meal with volunteers who serve, prepare, clean up, and bake dessert for the meal.

The **Parish Prayer Chain** is a group of parishioners who accept prayer requests by phone and email and faithfully pray for those in need. They understand the power of prayer.

Our **Card Ministry** assures that cards and notes of caring, concern, best wishes, and sympathy are sent to parishioners during appropriate times. This ministry allows fellow parishioners to know that they are in the thoughts and prayers of the parish at certain moments of their lives.

The **OLQA Book Club** is a social organization open to everyone who loves to read. We read and discuss books across a variety of genres and gather for fellowship. This group attempts to educate, inspire, and enlighten those who love to read.

The **Cradle Ministry** works hand in hand with the Pregnancy Center of Meadville. Situated in a very special place in our church is a beautiful handmade wooden cradle that serves as a daily reminder to all of us to clothe and care for the "little ones." We fill the cradle with much needed items to provide for the less fortunate babies and children and the Center provides support and counsel to their mothers.

The "**31 Club**" is the parish's means of fostering prayer for vocation to the priesthood and religious life. Participants simply choose a specific date and observe that date each month (1-31). They pledge to pray in special ways for such vocations. The best way to pray for this intention is to celebrate Mass that day, but other prayer is also encouraged on that day.

Prison Ministry: In Matthew 25:36 we read "I was in prison and you visited me." Prison Ministry is one of the Corporal Works of Mercy: reaching out to the lost sheep - the forgotten ones. We are all created in the likeness of God, and some have used their free will to lead them into dark places. Prison ministry offers an opportunity for these lost sheep to make a change, to experience the love of Jesus, and change their hearts, through contact with people who live their faith. "Visiting" can take many forms from sending a card/letter, prayer, volunteering for religious services/Bible studies, etc. Prison ministry is always open for more participation.

Parish management

Introduction

As Catholic Christians, we have a responsibility to practice good stewardship of the resources we have in our parish churches. Those resources include property, programs, investments, as well as the gifts and talents of our parishioners. It is the responsibility of the priest-administrator to oversee parish resources.

The various committees and teams have oversight of specific areas, and report to the priest administrator. One member of each major team will be a member of the council.

The primary committees and teams are the following: Evangelization, Religious Education, Buildings & Grounds, Finance Council, and Cemetery Committee. (The Finance Council is mandated, and has a unique status in the parish, under Canon Law). There are other groups and organizations that operate in conjunction with the committees. In order to operate without duplication of specific efforts, certain functions fall under the supervision of certain committees, rather than others. For example, "The Protection of Children Policy" is administered by Religious Education, but adherence to the Policy is required by all teams and committees, for example Children's Choir, under Music, or service projects of Evangelization, or Buildings and Grounds.

Collaboration and positive communication among teams is necessary for the best administration of resources. For example, finance must be consulted by buildings and grounds to fund long range projects. All committees and teams have responsibility for input to certain areas of the web-site. Evangelization and Religious Education will have primary usage of the website.

Parish Teams

Evangelization Team

The evangelization team has responsibility for several components of parish life, including expansion of membership, and retention of membership. Activities of the evangelization team are external and internal to the parish, and may include collaboration with other teams and committees. An example of collaboration might be in adult education, when evangelization and religious education overlap. Another example of collaboration might be coordination of stewardship of ministries (servers, choir, ushers, extraordinary ministers, greeters, etc.), to incorporate new or younger families into parish activities.

Religious Education Team

Religious Education Team is designed to assist parents in their role as the primary educators in faith for their children. Parishioners who volunteer as Catechists teach the youth through prayer, instruction, learning activities and example of dedicated service. Youth are encouraged to participate in the various social and service activities held in the parish, as well as attending regular worship with their parents. The Religious Education Team is also responsible for the coordination of adult Education, RCIA, Sacramental Preparation, Retreats and assistance with special programming from other parish organizations.

Parish Council

A pastoral council is a advisory and consultative body in dioceses and parishes of the Roman Catholic Church that serves to advise the parish priest or bishop about pastoral issues.

An advisory board to the pastor comprised of members drawn from each of the primary teams as listed above. The members facilitate the communication between all teams to facilitate smooth functioning of the parish.

Finance Council Team

Parish Finance Council assists the pastor in the administration of parish temporal matters. An active, well-formed Parish Finance Council is a key element for promoting the financial health of a parish, assuring accountability and assisting the pastor with his temporal responsibilities. The members are appointed by the Pastor.

Buildings and Grounds Team

The Building & Grounds Committee oversees all activities associated with the operation, maintenance, safety and security of all buildings, grounds, furnishings and equipment owned by the church, except items expressly the responsibility of another committee. Members are determined by the Pastor.

Cemetery Team

The cemetery committee is a rewarding ministry of volunteer parishioners. The committee is responsible for selection and sales of graves, maintenance of the cemetery including fall and spring clean-ups, gardening and planting, record keeping, future planning and improvements. Members are named at the discretion of the pastor-administrator.

FAITH FORMATION

This is general information, for CURRENT information please go to www.olqachurch.org.

Mission statement: The Faith Formation program of Our Lady Queen of the Americas strives to enable all members of our parish, and most especially our youth, to encounter Christ so as to be followers of Him in the fullest sense by instilling a clear and convincing knowledge of the Catholic Faith and a commitment to sincere Christian action that will continually bear witness to our Lord's infinite mercy and grace.

The parish **Religious Education** program is designed to assist parents in their role as the primary educators in faith for their children. Parishioners who volunteer as Catechists teach the youth through prayer, instruction, learning activities and example of dedicated service. Youth are encouraged to participate in the various social and service activities held in the parish, as well as attending regular worship with their parents. The program spans Pre-School for 4 year old through 12th grade and is held on scheduled Sundays from September through April.

To **register for our programs**, the Faith Formation Registration Form is available at the Faith Formation office. To **volunteer with the youth** in the Religious Education programs please contact the Faith Formation Office. **It is required that each volunteer must complete the mandatory Child and Youth Protection requirement of the Diocese of Erie and the State of Pennsylvania prior to working with any minors, an application to work with youth, and complete clearances to work with children. The Religious formation Directors will assist you in obtaining all necessary clearances and paperwork**

Classes are available for Preschool (4 years old) thru 12th grade.

Liturgy of the Word for Children takes place during the 10:30 Sunday Liturgy from September thru April. No registration is required.

The **Children's Library** offers numerous books and videos on the Catholic Faith. Children are welcome to check out books and videos from our Library. This is open during Elementary Religious Education class time. We have many books which children will enjoy to read on the Saints, Mary, Christmas, Easter, Forgiveness, Sacraments, and many more. We also have videos available. There are also items that will be of interest to high school students and adults.

There are ongoing **Faith Formation and Enrichment classes** that are offered at the parish for adults seeking to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the Faith. They may consist of a scriptural study, a class in theology or spirituality held at various times throughout the year, e.g., Theology Uncorked and Lenten Bible studies.

Sacramental Preparation. Parish religious formation program provides the catechesis that meet the requirements of the Diocese of Erie for sacramental preparation. Children attending Catholic schools are encouraged to attend parish classes of Sundays in order to provide a bonding of all the children prior to receiving the sacrament. All sacramental candidates and their parents when requested must attend parent meetings, retreats, and rehearsals for the sacrament. To prepare for the sacrament of First Eucharist and First Reconciliation, a child must be enrolled in the parish Faith Formation program or attend Catholic School for at least one year prior to and also the year of preparation. Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation begins in the 9th grade year and is a 3-year process ending with the sacrament of Confirmation in 11th grade. The family is

directly involved in the preparation of their child for the sacraments. The celebration of the sacraments is not dependent on age or grade, but on the readiness and preparedness of the individual.

Baptism may be celebrated privately or during Mass. Baptismal preparation is required of all parents requesting to have a child baptized. This preparation session is held multiple times throughout the Meadville Deanery including a yearly session at Our Lady Queen of the Americas. The session is 1½-2 hours in length. We recommend that this session be completed prior to the birth of your child. Please contact the office for session time and location and to schedule your child's baptism, and for requirements for baptismal names and guidelines for sponsor selection.

The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** (RCIA) is a process during which the Catholic community welcomes, prepares, and initiates new members into the Church. It is a process that begins in the Fall and reaches completion at the Easter Vigil each year. It is designed for those who have not been baptized, for those baptized in other faith traditions who now wish to become Catholic, or for those already baptized as Catholics and are requesting the other sacraments at this time.

Preparation for **First Holy Communion** is open to anyone in the third grade or above. One year's previous enrollment with 75% attendance in religious education or Catholic School as well as enrollment in the current year is required. Parents share in the preparation of their children for the celebration of the sacrament. The parish celebration of First Communion is held in May. The Sacrament of Reconciliation must precede First Communion.

Preparation for **First Reconciliation** is open to anyone in the second grade or above. One year's previous enrollment with 75% attendance in religious education or Catholic School as well as enrollment in the current year is required. Parents share in the preparation of their children for the celebration of the sacrament. The first celebration of Reconciliation for children usually takes place at a special communal celebration for parents and children during the season of Lent.

Young adults in eleventh grade or above may enroll as candidates for the **Sacrament of Confirmation**, provided they have been in a religious education program or Catholic School for the 9th, 10th and 11th grade years, minimum attendance each year must be 75%. Some of the required special events for confirmation candidates and their sponsors are: enrollment Mass, Confirmation candidate/sponsor retreat day, service, retreat, letter to the bishop, interview with the pastor, and rehearsal. The sacrament is usually celebrated in the spring.

Students are invited to the age appropriate Diocesan Youth Rallies throughout the year. Students are also invited to participate in **Catholic HEART Work Camp** (Summer Mission Trip), **Divine Mercy Encounter**, **Camp Totus Tuus**, and the **Diocesan Youth Board**.

There is also an organized effort to attend the annual **March for Life** in Washington, DC. In addition, the faith formation program provides retreat opportunities for middle school and high school.

The **Cursillo Movement** in the Diocese of Erie has been active since 1963. Membership is comprised of all the Catholic and Ecumenical brothers and sisters who have completed the Cursillo weekend. Cursillo provides an experience of Christian community and a spiritual blueprint for living the Christian life. The experience begins on

a Thursday evening and finishes Sunday evening. Priests and teams lead the participants in various experiences and practices that educate and help to form them in what it means to be a disciple of Christ in today's world. The grace of this enriching experience lasts a life time.

A couple planning to enter the **Sacrament of Matrimony** should contact the pastor at least six months in advance of the planned wedding date. Wedding dates should not be set in stone before meeting with the pastor. Participation in a Marriage Preparation Program is required before the celebration of the sacrament. A variety of programs are offered: Pre-Cana, Engaged Encounter, and the NOVA experience for those entering a second marriage. Necessary forms and preparations will be completed with the pastor or priest celebrant of the wedding.