



Sharing the Catholic Journey



Discovering faith, joy, and community

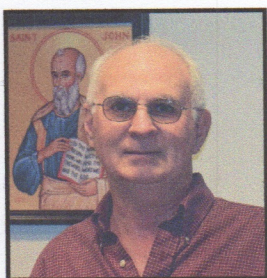
March 2015

St. John the Apostle Parish, Bloomington, IN

Fr. Daniel Mahan, Pastor

Sharing the Catholic Journey is a monthly newsletter for the parishioners of St. John the Apostle Parish. We welcome your comments, your suggestions, and your stories of faith. Please write to: sawyerdenise@sjabloomington.org

Meet...



Brad Howard

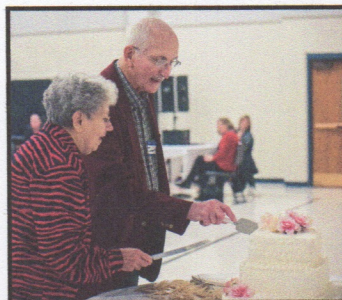
Brad was born in Daviess County, Kentucky. Growing up as a cradle Catholic, he attended Catholic schools from grade school through high school. He met his wife Nancy in Owensboro, Kentucky, and they

have now been married almost 46 years. They moved to Bloomington when Brad was first employed by Indiana University Radio-TV Services, as a broadcast technician for WTIU which began operation shortly afterwards. He worked on various studio and transmission systems, led numerous special projects and system upgrades, and managed equipment grants. He retired as manager of the engineering services unit after 43 years of service. Brad and Nancy have three children and four grandchildren, all of whom live in the Bloomington area.

Brad has been a member of St. John the Apostle Parish since its beginning in 1970. He served on the Liturgy Commission in the 1970's, was an extraordinary minister and taught 7th and 8th grade CCD for several years in the 1980's. He has been an usher/greeter, hospitality member for many years, served as an elected member of the Parish Council for two three-year terms, and is currently an extraordinary minister and Mass coordinator. He is a regular at Sunday morning Apologetics.

In his retirement, Brad enjoys time with his grandchildren, at home and numerous sports events, and also enjoys working on projects around the house, gardening, and travel, especially with the children and grandchildren.

Marriage Enrichment Celebration Valentine's Day



More Marriage Enrichment Celebration photos are on page 3.

Catholicism 101....

by Scott Benningfield, DRE

Reasons for Fasting and Abstinence



Catholics are known for their fasting and abstinence during Lent. We are to fast (i.e. just have 1 large meal and 2 small meals) and abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. We are to abstain from meat on the Fridays of Lent. Fasting is more about “quantity” and abstaining is more about “quality” (in this case, meat).

Why do we do this? This is about spiritual discipline. By fasting and abstaining, we reduce distractions so that we can focus our attention on God. Many times, the slight difficulty of fasting and abstaining prompts us to “lean on God” more which helps us with why we are doing this in the first place. We grow spiritually by fasting and abstinence; we grow closer to God. And we need to...because...we have to be strong in order to be soldiers for Christ. We have lost that type of language nowadays but we are in a spiritual battle. The devil wants to see us weak. We know that even as children of God, we have a strong tendency to consider ourselves first and foremost. Discipline makes us stronger and therefore able to do the right things for God and others and ourselves.

In 1st Corinthians chapter 9, St. Paul says:

²⁴ Do you not know that the runners in the stadium all run in the race, but only one wins the prize? Run so as to win.
²⁵ Every athlete exercises discipline in every way. They do it to win a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one...
²⁷ ...I drive my body and train it...

St. Paul uses the sports analogy. We know from other areas of life, success depends on discipline. A student (at least the vast majority!) cannot just flop into a desk and take a difficult test and expect to ace it. Studying requires discipline in setting aside time to study and using good study methods. A business owner cannot sit at his or her desk and expect profits to come flowing in. Running a business requires discipline in ensuring products are delivered on time, installed well, etc. Growing spiritually is no different. Practicing discipline is just simply a necessity if we want to continuously improve as Catholics.

It's appropriate that we do this during Lent because Lent is for prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. The Catechism says that these practices “express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others” (CCC 1434). No man is an

island. A good Catholic Christian should always be striving for the good relationship between himself/herself and God and neighbor. However, Lent serves as a wonderful reminder of this need. Plus, we are preparing ourselves for the celebration of Easter – the pinnacle of our liturgical year! The celebration of the Resurrection – Christ's conquering of death and the hope that it brings – is a beautiful time indeed. However, to fully appreciate it, we have to prepare for it.

Some may ask if fasting and abstinence are in the Bible. They are.

Exodus 34:28, Moses fasts:

²⁸ So Moses was there with the LORD for forty days and forty nights, without eating any food or drinking any water, and he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten words.

Daniel 9:3, Daniel fasts:

³ I [Daniel] turned to the Lord God, to seek help, in prayer and petition, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

Daniel 10:2-3, Daniel abstains:

² In those days, I, Daniel, mourned three full weeks. ³ I ate no savory food, took no meat or wine, and did not anoint myself at all until the end of the three weeks.

Matthew 4:1-2, Jesus fasts:

¹ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. ² He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry.

Jesus also speaks of how to fast [in Matt. 6:16-18] and that the disciples will fast when He (Jesus – the bridegroom) is away from them [in Matt. 9:14-15].

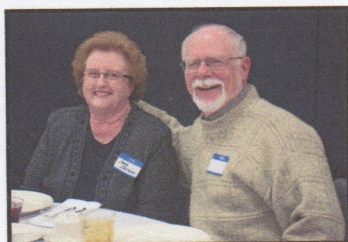
We see that fasting and abstinence are not something created to add more things to our lives. They have a purpose (in disciplining us and ultimately bringing us closer to God) and they are a biblical principle used throughout history.

May you have a wonderful Lent!

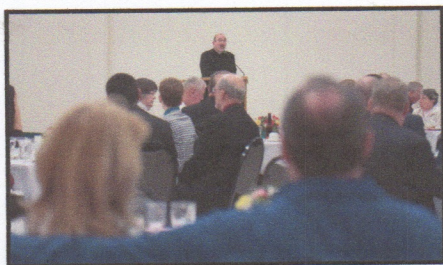


Marriage Enrichment Dinner

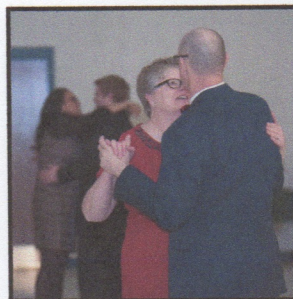
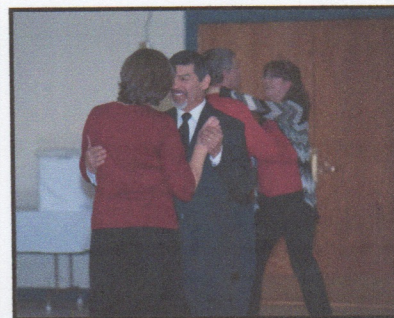
The evening was a great success, with 52 couples having signed up to attend. Schnitzelbank catered the delicious dinner, and Sherry Eller made a beautiful wedding cake which was cut into by the couple who has been married the longest and the couple who has been married the shortest time.



Father Mahan gave a wonderful talk about marriage. Then he led them through a renewal of their vows to each other, which was a moving experience. Couples then toasted each other with champagne.



After the dinner, the Swing Time Big Band provided the music, and many couples, young and old, hit the dance floor.



St. John's Dance Club

The St. John's dance club meets on the second Sunday of each month, in the gym. We start at 5:30 and dance for about an hour, sometimes longer. Anyone is welcome to come, we currently have about 6-10 couples who come when they can. Most of us are still learning and are by no means professionals. It has been a nice relaxed atmosphere to learn and practice our dance steps since the few lessons we had last year before the marriage enrichment celebration. PLEASE COME JOIN US!

Stories of Faith....

by John Seubert

John Seubert grew up in the Cincinnati area, coming from several generations of Catholics. As a student in a Catholic school, he served as an altar server at Mass. He attended the University of Cincinnati where he studied chemical engineering. After graduating from the university, he was hired by Crane in 1960 where he worked until he retired in 1988. He was involved in evaluation and testing, which involved a significant amount of travel.

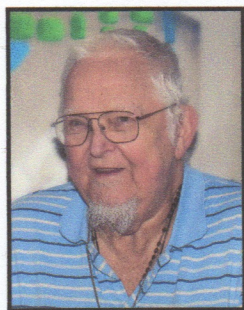
He met his wife Judy when she was in the 5th grade. She lived up the street from him and was a good friend of his sister. They began dating when he was in his third year of college and were married in 1959. They had been married for 50 years when she unexpectedly died after a knee replacement surgery in 2009.

They had seven children together, two of whom died in early childhood. Their first son was born prematurely and died after 36 hours because of under-developed lungs. A daughter, Joy, died of sudden death syndrome at the age of 3. She had been the first baby baptized in the newly created and consecrated St. John the Apostle Catholic Church on West 3rd Street.

John had been active in the creation of this new parish. He had been on the building committee for the new church; he was involved in the purchase of the statue of St. John the Apostle that now stands near the entrance to the church grounds. He was also very active in the Knights of Columbus, especially in the pro-life mission of the organization.

His interest in pro-life came long before Roe vs. Wade. When he was a student at the University of Cincinnati, he visited the medical museum on campus where he saw bottles on display with animals and deformed babies inside. It didn't seem right to him that these babies should be on display in such a way.

He joined the Knights of Columbus in 1965, and by 1971 when the issue of legal abortion was heating up, he became aware of Dr. John Wilke, author of the *Handbook on Abortion*. He was one of the pioneers of the pro-life movement, and his book contained twelve pages of very graphic photos of aborted babies.



The thinking at the time was that if people realized what literally happens during abortion, they would be much more likely to reject its legalization.

There was increased talk of legislation, and as the Grand Knight of the local Knights of Columbus, John purchased pro-life slides and posters to be used by the Knights at the Monroe County Fair. His two eldest daughters would help him set up the booth and the pamphlet rack. He would also show slides at K of C meetings to educate the other Knights. He was named "Knight of the Year."

He organized and ran the booth through 1973. By that time, abortion had been legalized, and there were increasingly vocal comments about the graphic images at the booth, so he switched to smaller ones.

By 1983, John had become less active in the Knights. By then, he and his wife had more children, and family life kept him busy. At some point in the late 1980s, the family began a slow drift away from the Catholic Church. After Judy's sudden death in 2009, John found himself at her bedside, praying over and over, "Hail Mary, full of grace...." When his children arrived, he told them he had to return to the Church.

He returned to St. John the Apostle, now in a new location. Since then, he has become a familiar presence at Planned Parenthood every Thursday and frequently during 40 Days for Life campaigns. Unable to stand for long periods because of his health, he initially would bring a stool to sit on. Now he stays in his car to pray. It's easy to spot his car for it is covered with pro-life bumper stickers. He has also rigged a large sign pole that can stick out his sun roof. He is also known for the wide variety of durable and weatherproof pro-life signs he has created.

John enjoys cooking, something he often did when his wife was still alive. He is a creative cook; at the most recent Chili Cook-Off, he won the cornbread contest with his unusual pumpkin corn bread. He now spends some of his time scanning the old records of the local Knights of Columbus.



Clonmacnoise in Ireland

by Denise Sawyer

Since we celebrate St. Patrick's Day on March 17, March always seems like a good time for The Roamin' Catholic to take another brief tour to Ireland, this time to Clonmacnoise, located by the River Shannon in central Ireland. When we visited Ireland with friends in the spring of 2004, some of my very favorite places were the ruins of the many monasteries, cathedrals, and ancient cemeteries. Although I was not yet a Catholic (that would happen 18 months later), I was on my journey. Visiting these ruins was a wonderful opportunity to see one small part of our Church's rich history, the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Clonmacnoise is a medieval monastery founded by St. Claran in 545-548. Although the area seems remote today, at that time it lay at the crossroads of medieval routes that linked all parts of Ireland. The monastery was well-known and thrived from the 7th to the 12th centuries. Plundered by the Vikings and the Anglo-Normans, it fell to the English in 1552.



St. Ciaran of Clonmacnoise was born in 516. His father was a carpenter and a chariot maker, and St. Clarian, along with Saints Columba and Brendan, was educated by Abbot St. Finian at the Monastery of Clonard, later becoming a teacher himself. In 534 he was ordained a priest and went to the island of Aranmore, in Galway, off the western coast of Ireland. There he became a disciple of Abbot St. Enda who advised him that he should build a monastery. He followed that advice, traveling to central Ireland and visiting several monasteries. Eventually he and eight companions settled at Clonmacnoise, where he established his monastery. Sadly, he did not live to see his plans

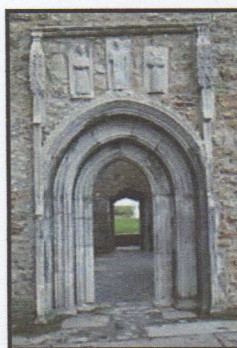
completed, for he died of the plague about seven months after the work had first begun. However, his legacy continued as the monastery became well-known for its piety and scholarship.



Near the end of the 7th century, a plague killed many of the students and teachers. The greatest growth for Clonmacnoise came between the 8th and the 12th centuries,



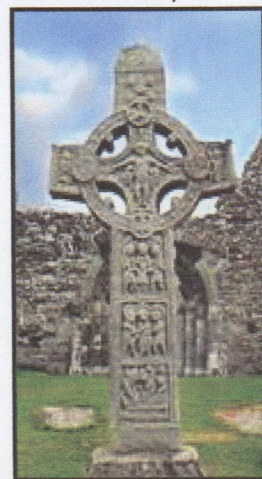
although not without continuing conflicts. It was attacked frequently during these centuries by both the Vikings and the Normans. The early wooden buildings began to be replaced by more durable stone buildings, including the towers that often stored their sacred manuscripts and served as some protection during the attacks. A community grew up around the monastery, and by the 11th century, it is estimated that the population was between 1500 and 2000.



The artisans associated with Clonmacnoise created beautiful and enduring works of metal and stone. The Whispering Door, seen in the photo at left, is the north doorway to the 15th century cathedral. The acoustics of the

doorway are such that even a whisper is carried inside the building. Above the door way are carvings of St. Francis, St. Patrick, and St. Dominic. They also created beautiful stone crosses, including the Scripture Cross at right.

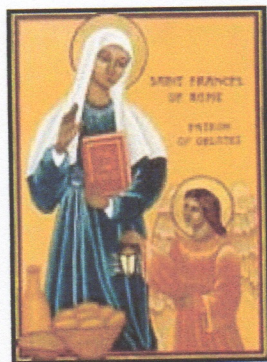
By the 12th century, Clonmacnoise began to decline. The town of Athlone to the north became the most popular route for crossing the River Shannon, and so people began migrating north. As the population dwindled, the monastery lost the support that it needed to survive. At the same time, other religious orders began to move into Ireland, such as the Franciscans and the Benedictines.



However, it remains a popular tourist destination. Saint Pope John Paul II visited Clonmacnoise on his visit to Ireland in 1979.

Monday, March 9: Memorial of Saint Frances of Rome

Saint Frances of Rome was born in 1384. A wife and mother, she dedicated her life to prayer and to helping the poor. She founded the Oblates of Mary. She died in 1440. She is usually depicted in a black cassock and white veil of the Benedictines, while distributing bread to the poor. She is often accompanied by her guardian angel, as seen in the icon image above.



ANTIPHON: Whoever does my Father's will, says the Lord, he is my brother, my sister, and my mother.

Tuesday, March 17: Memorial of Saint Patrick



Saint Patrick was born in Britain in 385. While still a child, he was taken by Irish raiders and taken to Ireland as a slave. He later escaped and returned to his homeland where he became a priest and later returned to the same place where he had been a slave. He dedicated his life to the spread of

Christianity in pagan Ireland.

ANTIPHON: Go, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Thursday, March 19: Solemnity of Saint Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary



There are several feast days that honor Saint Joseph; this one honors and remembers the man who became the husband of Mary, the foster-father of Jesus. Although not mentioned after the account of Jesus in the temple at the age of 12, Joseph undoubtedly had

a powerful role during Jesus' youth, passing on to him his knowledge of carpentry, his love of his Jewish faith. God knew that His Son would need a father in his life, and God chose wisely.

ANTIPHON: Behold, a faithful and prudent steward, whom the Lord set over his household.

Mogrovejo

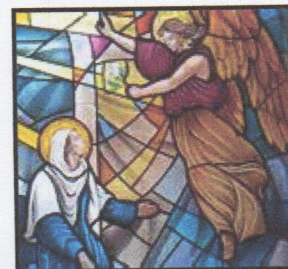
Saint Turibius was born near Leon, Spain, around 1538. His religious life came about in an unusual way for he was first a layman professor at the University of Salamanca. He was appointed to be the president of the court of the inquisition by King Philip II. Then in 1580, The pope nominated to the bishopric. First he had to receive his orders to the priesthood, and then he was sent to the New World, to Lima, Peru. He became a very dedicated priest in a very large diocese that was growing rapidly as the indigenous people were being converted to Christianity. He is the patron saint of Peru.



ANTIPHON: This is a faithful and wise steward: the Lord entrusted the care of his household to him, so that he might give them their portion of food at the proper season.

Wednesday, March 25: Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

This solemnity always comes exactly nine months before Christmas. On this day we remember the visit of Gabriel to Mary, telling her that she would conceive in her womb a child who would be the son of God. Although she did not understand how this could be, her answer was a simple one. "Be it done unto me according to thy will."



ANTIPHON: The Lord said, as he entered the world: Behold, I come to do your will, O God.

Sunday, March 29: Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

As early as the fourth century in Jerusalem, the Christians processed with palm branches on Palm Sunday to celebrate Christ's entrance into Jerusalem, a week that would end with his crucifixion. By the ninth century, this practice had spread throughout the Christian world. Gathering first for the blessing of the palms, they would proceed out of the church and then returned to the church for the Mass. They would continue to hold the palms during the reading of the Passion.



ANTIPHON: The great crowd that had gathered for the feast cried out to the Lord: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.