



Sharing the Catholic Journey

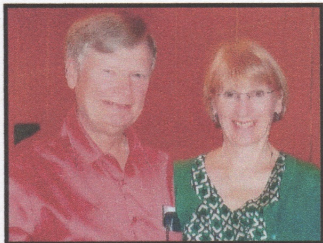
Discovering faith, joy, and community

June/July 2014

St. John the Apostle Parish, Bloomington, IN

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

Meet....



**Richard and Linda
Stanford**

I grew up at the Jersey Shore, and met my future wife, Linda, there during summer vacation in 1966. We are married 45

years. After four years of service in the United States Air Force during the Vietnam War Era, I attended three universities and received my doctorate in biology from Michigan State University. We have one son. He lives in Bloomington with his lovely wife and our granddaughter who was baptized here at St. John in 2012 when she was a newborn.

My professional career's major emphases were population dynamics, economics, conservation, and environmental chemistry. My wife was a professor of art history and an associate provost at Michigan State University. Now, we are both retired. We have been fortunate to travel. I have been to six of the seven major continents.

The spiritual influence of my home pastor at St. Mary Cathedral, Lansing, Michigan, and his profound holiness deeply affected my consideration of Holy Orders. I was ordained a deacon in 2003 in the Diocese of Lansing. My permanent ministries included ecumenical work, proclamation of the word through preaching, evangelization especially through the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and providing food and shelter to the poorest of the poor while working with other faith traditions. I am inspired by the 7th Principle of our Catholic social teaching, "Caring for all of God's creation," to better understand the

Fr. Daniel Mahan, Pastor

interaction between humans and all creation including work through national and local conservation groups.

I am most grateful to have received faculties at St. John the Apostle. I look forward to serving with Fr. Mahan who has shown great leadership and creativity. I am grateful for the kindness of St. John parishioners and I eagerly anticipate collaborating with you to serve Our Lord.

Yours in Christ,
Deacon Dick Stanford

First Communion Class May 4, 2014



*St. John the Apostle
First Communion - May 4, 2014*

Front row from left to right: Joske Herndon, Kathleen Branham, Marilyn Ballard, Emily Francis, Adelyn Nickols, Ellie Pfeiffer, Harlie Robbins, Monica Mobley, Abigail Lee.

Back row from left to right: Logan Wallace, Hayden Simmonds, Matthew Phillips, Father Mahan, Elijah Mercer, Thomas Mullins, Luke Horman

Catholicism 101....

by Scott Benningfield, DRE



Dignity of the Individual

We are willed into existence by the love of God. This love gives every individual inherent dignity. The Church sees the living image of God Himself in every person (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, #105). We see the foundation for this in the Book of Genesis: "27God created man in his image, in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them" (Gen 1:27). But wait! It gets better! There's more! Christ as the "the image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15) gave/gives humanity immense dignity. God became one of us! Additionally and more significant to our salvation, Jesus Christ redeemed us. He reconciled humanity's relationship with God. Through His resurrection, we are given hope to union with God in heaven! As Brian Benestad notes in his book: "According to Catholic teaching, people have dignity because they are created in the image and likeness of God, redeemed by Jesus Christ, and destined for eternal life..." (Benestad, *Church, State, and Society*, p.38). Our lives are not aimless; our lives have purpose. We are given foundational dignity which has received redemption and a promise of a heavenly destiny (if we embrace it).

Some Work to Do

This dignity is foundational and cannot be lost or earned. But with this dignity there comes responsibility – not only for our salvation but also for the care and concern of others. As St. Paul reminds us, "19Do you not know that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?" (1 Cor 6:19). Our creation by the Creator bears us *gift but also action*. We as Catholic Christians need to tend to our "temple" and respect others. We are to live out the love of God that we have experienced. It is very difficult at times. There's no question about that. This dignity extends to the unborn, the infirm, and to all of us (saints and sinners). Dignity as foundational means its application is across the board.

A Benefit to Us Now

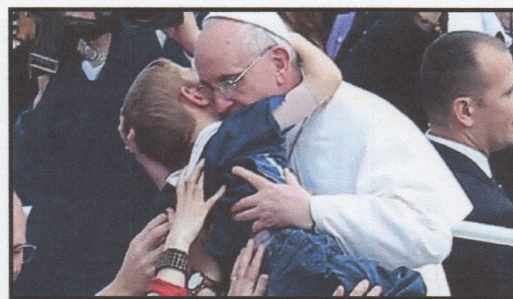
The Church reminds us to keep our "proper lenses" on and to discard the "faulty lenses" that society so easily sells us. There is a benefit to this – one that leads to justice. "A just society can become a reality only when it is based on the respect of the transcendent dignity of the human person [as] the person represents the ultimate end of society" (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, #132).

The Church is concerned for the whole person and the "whole picture" – heavenly and earthly. The Church serves as a bridge to God. It cares for us here on earth and desires to help us get to heaven. We have to be vigilant in our awareness that there are things that will derail us if we are not careful. "The character of the civilizations and cultures in which we live helps or hinders us in achieving a blessed eternal life" (Benestad, *Church, State, and Society*, p.35). We can *easily see* how many forces are out there which are hindering our path to eternal life.

Faulty Lenses

Alas, there are some who follow different paths in looking at the individual and are unconcerned about these responsibilities. There are many "faulty lenses" out there due to ulterior motives. As a result, some can easily develop "reductions" in their outlook towards individuals and therefore rationalize their manipulation of others. As the Church reminds us, "modern civilization itself often complicates the approach to God not for any essential reason but because it is so heavily engrossed in earthly affairs" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 19). Many enjoy the "stuff" and stimuli of diversion and many simply distrust the immaterial realities that the Church proclaims due to selfishness and a frightened avoidance to change.

Let us pray for those who do not see dignity as inherent, and since we know it, let us strive to live a "life of virtuous witness". Hopefully, virtue cultivated will bring others to reconsider the dignity of the individual that we profess. Hopefully, this will attract others to a deeper relationship with Jesus and His Church because they will see that something beautiful is moving people to a higher appreciation of mankind.



Pope Quote:

The term 'person' has been coined to signify that a man cannot be wholly contained within the concept 'individual member of the species', but that there is something more to him, a particular richness and perfection in the manner of his being, which can only be brought out by the use of the word 'person'."

Saint John Paul II

A look at Adoration.....

A Personal Encounter with Jesus



Imagine......just for a moment that you were given the opportunity to sit at the feet of Jesus. Sometimes He would talk to you, and you would listen. Other times you would talk to Him and He would listen, a conversation between friends. And often you might simply sit with Him in companionable silence. Who among us wouldn't marvel at such an opportunity, such a gift?

Do you realize that you can really do that? When you sit in front of the Blessed Sacrament in Adoration, you are literally sitting at the feet of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, just as did Martha and Mary, just as did the disciples. He is there – in His body, blood, soul, and divinity, in the form of a consecrated host. Many of us are given this opportunity every week, and yet we tell ourselves (and Jesus) that we are just too busy to find time to spend that hour with Him.

The most precious gift we could ever receive from God is a Mystery which many of us choose to ignore because it requires that we come to Adoration with the eyes of faith. However, from the very beginning of the Church, the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist was believed and taught by the Apostles.

Even if you truly don't understand, come and sit quietly in Adoration anyway. Open your heart to Jesus. The answers to all of your questions, all of your doubts, as well as the guidance for dealing with the problems we all face in life are there, at His feet. This could become the most important hour of your entire week. You will begin to understand that you are feeding your soul.



Adoration Hours at St. John's

Every Friday: 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
First Fridays: 6:00 p.m. Thursday, after Mass,
until the 5:30 p.m. Mass on Friday

"Oh, come let us adore Him."

History of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

The belief in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist was believed and taught by the Apostles. In the earliest centuries, the consecrated bread would be brought home by the early Christians to give to the sick, as well as to be consumed daily during the week to keep them connected to the Eucharist.

Early hermits reserved the Eucharist in their cells, and by the middle of the third century, it was a general practice for hermits. The immediate purpose was so that they could give themselves communion. However, they were very aware of the Real Presence, and treated the Eucharist with reverence. In a book about St. Basil, who died in 379, there are references to reserving the Blessed Sacrament in his cell. He is said to have divided the Eucharistic Bread into three parts when he celebrated Mass in the monastery. One part he consumed, the second part he gave to the monks, and a third he placed in a golden dove suspended over the altar. When monasticism changed from solitary living to living in community, the Eucharist began to be reserved in the churches of monasteries and convents.

In the 11th century, a French monk began to teach that the bread and wine did not become the body and blood of Jesus. Pope Gregory VII demanded a retraction from the priest. As a result of this heresy, the Church began to refine its teaching on the Real Presence. Gregory's teaching on the Real Presence was quoted verbatim in Pope Paul VI's historic document *Mysterium Fidei* (1965) to meet a new challenge to the Eucharist in our day—very similar to what happened in the eleventh century. Throughout Europe in the Middle Ages, Eucharistic processions and visits to the Blessed Sacrament became part of Catholic life.

The Council of Trent in 1545 confirmed this devotion. The Council declared that Christ should be worshiped now in the Eucharist no less than He had been in first century Palestine. The Blessed Sacrament "is the same God whom the apostles adored in Galilee."

Due to a misunderstanding of the Second Vatican Council, some Catholics have been led to think that Eucharistic adoration and Corpus Christi processions are outdated practices. As a result, many have been puzzled by the growth of Adoration in our churches. That was never the intention of the Council. Today Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is flourishing across the country and around the world. Monthly, weekly, even perpetual Adoration has become commonplace.