

From Pontiff to Pew (General Audience- continued)

... thinks that he understands the Holy Scriptures ... but puts such an interpretation upon them as does not tend to build up this twofold love of God and our neighbour, does not yet understand them as he ought". [4] The divine origin of the Scripture also recalls that the Gospel, entrusted to the witness of the baptized, despite embracing all the dimensions of life and reality, transcends them: it cannot be reduced to a mere philanthropic or social message, but is the joyful proclamation of the full and eternal life that God has given to us in Jesus.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us thank the Lord because, in his goodness, he ensures our lives do not lack the essential nourishment of his Word, and let us pray that our words, and even more so our lives, do not obscure the love of God that is narrated in them.

From the Pastor's Desk

*This week has been very busy for us here at Visitation Parish. First of all, one party has come forward with qualified interest in our school building; however, there is ABSOLUTELY NOTHING DEFINITE to report at this time and we are still seeking interested parties to come forward to look at our building with no promises being made to any of them. Offers will be entertained on first come first serve basis. What that means is that they will be reviewed, without prioritizing any of them. What everyone must understand is that an agreement will be reached with a potential lessor with the overall future of Visitation Parish firmly in mind, that is a firm resolve to do what is best for us as a **Catholic** community of faith. With that in mind, again, all offers are welcome and will be considered.*

*Secondly, we are making remote preparations for Lent. We hope that ALL PARISHIONERS will consider participating in the PRAYER PARTNER ministry, especially those who have never done so before. If you think about it, it really isn't all that taxing, and it is actually very rewarding. All you need to do is put your name in the glass container, promise to spend a few minutes praying for another parishioner during Lent, and BOOM, you have someone praying for you during the Lenten Season. **HOW REWARDING IS THAT???** We are also preparing for Liturgy on Ash Wednesday. There will be two Masses here at*

Visitation (12:05 PM and 5:30 PM) with the distribution of ashes (Please don't just pop in for ashes – that is rather tacky); and there will be a prayer service with the distribution of ashes at Valley Pike Manor at 1:30 PM. Also, our Fish Fries will begin on Ash Wednesday and continue all of the Fridays of Lent (with the exception of Good Friday) from 11:00AM – 6:00 PM. A reminder: the Fish Fries are a takeout and delivery service (more details can be found on the other page of the insert).

With regard to the Fish Fries, as always we are in GREAT need of volunteers. There is a sign-up sheet in the main vestibule of the Church. It is important to note that if you volunteer you **are not** expected by any means to volunteer for the entire day. Volunteers are a key to the success of the Fish Fries and please



know that this is a needed fundraiser to meet our parish expenses (especially in light of our situation with the school). We are always looking for volunteers. All those who benefit from the parish's contribution to Catholic education should note that if you do not otherwise volunteer, there is a moral obligation to come forward to volunteer to assist with this fundraiser. In any case, if you have not ever volunteered and you are prayerfully considering coming forward, talk with one of our volunteers (just look at the list). Each Friday is actually lots of fun, and as a ministry, some would not even say they consider it to be "work." So please, we really need volunteers. Many hands make light work. I am praying that the Lord will move hearts so that our Lenten Fish Fries will be a success..

We will be holding what I consider to be a no brainer fundraiser beginning later this month. We will be raffling off a \$500 Sheetz Gas Card. Tickets will be five dollars (\$5) each or five (5) for twenty dollars (\$20). The winner will be determined by the PA evening daily number. In the event that the winning ticket **is not sold**, the winning ticket will be drawn from the tickets **that are sold**. The proceeds of this fundraiser are earmarked to help offset the shortfall due to our loss of a tenant for our school building. It is a fact that **almost everyone** needs gasoline. Please consider buying one or more tickets to support this fundraiser to

meet an expressed budgetary need. Also, if possible, it would be helpful if anyone could take a few tickets to sell to help us to meet our goal.

In terms of my health, I am continuing to heal from my extended hospital stay which really "threw me for a loop." I am happy to report; however, that I am nearly to the point that I was prior to being admitted to the hospital. One thing that I know that I have neglected to share with you is that in December, following a scheduled Dexascan, I was diagnosed with significant osteoarthritis which in theory has weakened my pelvis and hip bones (although I have little to no pain in those areas) and in practice has affected my ankles and feet severely. To be honest, the pain in my feet is so unbearable at times, it is difficult for me to walk. Thanks be to God that I am in the process of preparing for low grade radiation treatments at Forbes Hospital which are said to relieve the pain significantly in an average of 75% of patients who undergo the treatment. I am so thankful to God for the opportunity to undergo this procedure regardless of the outcome. So many people have it worse than I do and at least I have the chance to seek potential pain-relieving treatment. Never let it be said that God does not care for us, and whatever his will may be at the very least he provides us with the patience to endure. This is, at the very least my witness, and I will remain firm in my belief that the God who covenanted himself with me in love in the person and event of Jesus the Christ will always be at my side. This week we celebrate the memorial feast of Our Lady of Lourdes on Wednesday, February 11. As you know, Lourdes, France is a great center of mystical healing through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is very dear to my heart. Perhaps that day, if you cannot join us for Mass and/or Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, you can raise your voices in prayer through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary for all those in need of healing (I ask somewhat selfishly that you keep me in mind also that day).

One final thing. I would be remiss if I did not remind you about our Mardi Gras party on Saturday from 5:00 PM until 6:30 PM in the School Cafeteria. There will be lots of food (including relatively mild jambalaya prepared by yours truly) many other foods either brought in or made by me. As always, you won't go home hungry or wanting for good conversation. I am confident that a good time will be had by all. I look forward to seeing you there.