

P A R I S H S T A F F

PASTORAL ASSOCIATE FOR ADMINISTRATION

Deacon Donald A. Stamm

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - 226-2384

Director of Religious Education: Thomas J. Acemoglu

RCIA / Adult Formation: Deacon Douglas G. Smith

Baptismal Prep: Deacon William Crosby

YOUTH MINISTRY 226-6239

Youth Ministry Coordinators

Brittany Marie Evans & Thomas Schaefer

MUSIC DIRECTOR

James R. Kendall

SACRISTAN

Mark Costantino

PLANT MAINTENANCE

Vito Cudia

SPECIAL MINISTRIES

St. Vincent de Paul 225-5531

President: Joseph Illuminato

Catholic Youth Organization : olphcyophil@optonline.net

Program Coordinator: Phil Amico

516-732-8520

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

JUNE 3– THE MOST HOLY TRINITY SUNDAY

- 6:30 Living & Deceased Members of the Nocturnal Adoration Society
- 8:00 Respect Life
- 9:30 Marion Ierardi
- 11:00 Book of the Faithful Departed
- 12:30 Mass for the People of the Parish
- 5:00 Deacon Bill Crosby (for the Living)
- 6:30 Polish Mass

MONDAY: JUNE 4— WEEKDAY

- 8:00 Corrado Costigiola
- 12:00 Rafael F. Rajo
- 7:00 Gertrude Matteo
- 7:30 Devotions (Novena)

TUESDAY: JUNE 5– St. Boniface, Bishop and Martyr

- 8:00 Guiseppa Lentini
- 12:00 Joan Monicka Dwyer
- 7:00 John W. Stoker

WEDNESDAY: JUNE 6— Saint Norbert, Bishop

- 8:00 Josephine Connolly
- 12:00 Ed Liencicki
- 7:00 Fannie Fresolone

THURSDAY: JUNE 7—WEEKDAY

- 8:00 Dorothy Brady
- 12:00 William Tammone
- 7:00 Keith Walsh

FRIDAY: JUNE 8—WEEKDAY

- 8:00 Steve Grzesik
- 12:00 Msgr. Richard F. Dunn
- 7:00 Frank & Frances Peluso

SATURDAY: JUNE 9— St. Ephrem, Deacon and Doctor

- 8:00 Porzio Twins
- 9:00 Angelo Cuzzo

VIGIL MASS –

- 5:00 All Souls in Purgatory

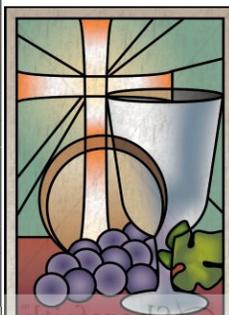
Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam



Mission Statement

“Trusting in God, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and, motivated by Christ’s Life, Death and Resurrection, we, the people of God, under the protection of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, accept as our mission, the evangelization of our parishioners both active and inactive. We accept the call to bring all to a personal, Covenant relationship with Jesus as Lord and Savior, to live the Paschal Mystery and to promote the spiritual health and growth of everyone in our parish community.”

- The OLPH Pastoral Council



Altar Wine

In Memory of

Salvatore Matera

Requested by

The Renna Family



From the Pastor's Desk - This weekend I want to begin sharing with you the following information regarding "Religious Liberty" and the deep concern we must all have about how this liberty is being threatened within our own country. We must all increase our knowledge of this subject, it's affect on our Catholic Faith and the implications that must be considered as we prepare to vote this coming November.

Our First, Most Cherished Liberty: A Statement on Religious Liberty

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty

Religious Liberty Is More Than Freedom of Worship

Religious liberty is not only about our ability to go to Mass on Sunday or pray the Rosary at home. It is about whether we can make our contribution to the common good of all Americans. Can we do the good works our faith calls us to do, without having to compromise that very same faith? Without religious liberty properly understood, all Americans suffer, deprived of the essential contribution in education, health care, feeding the hungry, civil rights, and social services that religious Americans make every day, both here at home and overseas.

What is at stake is whether America will continue to have a free, creative, and robust civil society—or whether the state alone will determine who gets to contribute to the common good, and how they get to do it. Religious believers are part of American civil society, which includes neighbors helping each other, community associations, fraternal service clubs, sports leagues, and youth groups. All these Americans make their contribution to our common life, and they do not need the permission of the government to do so. Restrictions on religious liberty are an attack on civil society and the American genius for voluntary associations.

The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America issued a statement about the administration's contraception and sterilization mandate that captured exactly the danger that we face:

Most troubling, is the Administration's underlying rationale for its decision, which appears to be a view that if a religious entity is not insular, but engaged with broader society, it loses its "religious" character and liberties. Many faiths firmly believe in being open to and engaged with broader society and fellow citizens of other faiths. The Administration's ruling makes the price of such an outward approach the violation of an organization's religious principles. This is deeply disappointing. **This is not a Catholic issue. This is not a Jewish issue. This is not an Orthodox, Mormon, or Muslim issue. It is an American issue.**

The Most Cherished of American Freedoms

In 1634, a mix of Catholic and Protestant settlers arrived at St. Clement's Island in Southern Maryland from England aboard the *Ark* and the *Dave*. They had come at the invitation of the Catholic Lord Baltimore, who had been granted Maryland by the Protestant King Charles I of England. While Catholics and Protestants were killing each other in Europe, Lord Baltimore imagined Maryland as a society where people of different faiths could live together peacefully. This vision was soon codified in Maryland's 1649 Act Concerning Religion (also called the "Toleration Act"), which was the first law in our nation's history to protect an individual's right to freedom of conscience.

Maryland's early history teaches us that, like any freedom, religious liberty requires constant vigilance and protection, or it will disappear. Maryland's experiment in religious toleration ended within a few decades. The colony was placed under royal control, and the Church of England became the established religion. Discriminatory laws, including the loss of political rights, were enacted against those who refused to conform. Catholic chapels were closed, and Catholics were restricted to practicing their faith in their homes. The Catholic community lived under these conditions until the American Revolution.

By the end of the 18th century, our nation's founders embraced freedom of religion as an essential condition of a free and democratic society. James Madison, often called the Father of the Constitution, described conscience as "the most sacred of all property." He wrote that "the Religion then of every man must be left to the conviction and conscience of every man; and it is the right of every man to exercise it as these may dictate." George Washington wrote that "the establishment of Civil and Religious Liberty was the Motive that induced me to the field of battle." Thomas Jefferson assured the Ursuline Sisters—who had been serving a mostly non-Catholic population by running a hospital, an orphanage, and schools in Louisiana since 1727—that the principles of the Constitution were a "sure guarantee" that their ministry would be free "to govern itself according to its own voluntary rules, without interference from the civil authority." It is therefore fitting that when the Bill of Rights was ratified, religious freedom had the distinction of being the First Amendment. Religious liberty is indeed the first liberty. The First Amendment guarantees that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Recently, in a unanimous Supreme Court judgment affirming the importance of that first freedom, the Chief Justice of the United States explained that religious liberty is not just the first freedom for Americans; rather it is the first in the history of democratic freedom, tracing its origins back the first clauses of the Magna Carta of 1215 and beyond. In a telling example, Chief Justice Roberts illustrated our history of religious liberty in light of a Catholic issue decided upon by James Madison, who guided the Bill of Rights through Congress and is known as the architect of the First Amendment:

[In 1806] John Carroll, the first Catholic bishop in the United States, solicited the Executive's opinion on who should be appointed to direct the affairs of the Catholic Church in the territory newly acquired by the Louisiana Purchase. After consulting with President Jefferson, then-Secretary of State James Madison responded that the selection of church "functionaries" was an "entirely ecclesiastical" matter left to the Church's own judgment. The "scrupulous policy of the Constitution in guarding against a political interference with religious affairs," Madison explained, prevented the Government from rendering an opinion on the "selection of ecclesiastical individuals." That is our American heritage, our most cherished freedom. It is the first freedom because if we are not free in our conscience and our practice of religion, all other freedoms are fragile. If citizens are not free in their own consciences, how can they be free in relation to others, or to the state? If our obligations and duties to God are impeded, or even worse, contradicted by the government, then we can no longer claim to be a land of the free, and a beacon of hope for the world.

May God +bless you, and yours, today and forever. - Father Anthony

BANNS OF MARRIAGE

Third Time:

Philip A. Renna (OLPH) & Katherine D. Casella (O L of A, Copiague)

Second Time:

Joseph Passanante & Tina Faulhaber

First & Second Time:

Frank DiFranco & Nancy McGowan (Both of OLPH)

First Time:

Salvatore Falcone (OLPH) & Jacquelyn Birkel



PRAY FOR THE SICK

*Herb Otten
Frank Venezia
Frank R. Lent*



Dear God,
We place our worries in Your hands and ask that You restore Your servant to health again.

Baptisms

*Clancy Pippa Phelan
Conly Hugh Phelan*

We Welcome you, with love, to our parish family!



PRAY FOR THE DEAD

*Rose Ciancarelli
Dorothy Ferrier
Winifred Schade*

We ask you, O God, to be our quiet strength and consolation

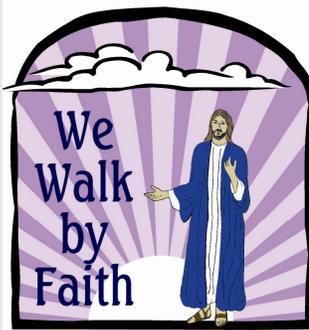


As Christian Stewards in Today's World, We "Walk by Faith."

June 3, 2012 — Most Holy Trinity Sunday

Today's second reading reminds us that we are the adopted sons and daughters—the heirs—of God. We are good stewards of our inheritance when we share our faith and fulfill Our Lord's command to "go...and make disciples of all nations."

We are grateful this week for all stewards in our parish who recognize that life is a gift from God and a sacred trust. "What are you going to do today with your gift of life?"



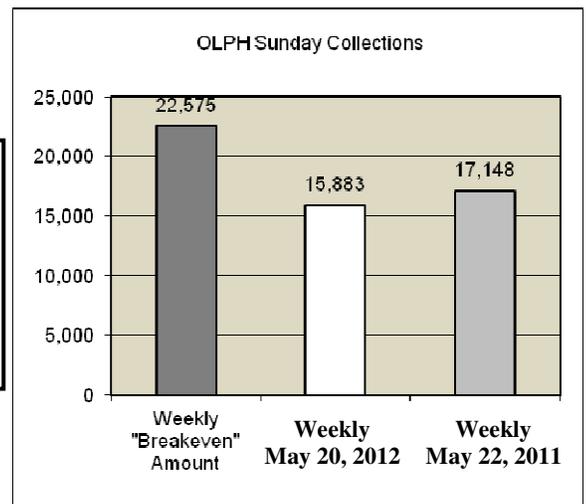
WEEKLY OFFERTORY

Your Parish Finance Council has suggested that this simple bar graph be added to our weekly bulletin to illustrate the gap between the Sunday collection and the amount needed to achieve a balanced parish budget. Since the beginning of our fiscal year, September 1, 2011, we have experienced a weekly shortfall in collections. It is urgent that we begin to reverse this trend.

**OUR PARISH'S FINANCIAL HEALTH
DEPENDS ON YOUR GENEROSITY**

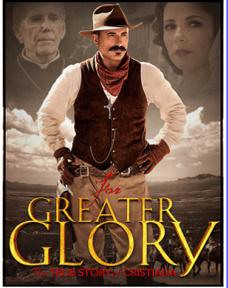
All envelopes must have your account number and offering amount indicated in order for your account to be credited (for taxes) those weekly and special donations. Separate checks in each envelope, please.

The account number, after the #267, is located under the date. Remember you must be registered (filled out an information card) in the parish in order to receive envelopes. Thank you.



PLEASE HELP CLOSE THE GAP!

PARISH NEWS

- **Friday June 15th, United States Bill of Rights Rosary:** Please support the *Holy Name Society's Patriotic Rosary on Friday, June 15th*, "The Solemnity of The Sacred Heart of Jesus". We pray for Freedom of Religion and all other natural rights and personal freedoms our constitution guarantees. We will meet at **11am in the Lindenhurst Village Square**; rain or shine. Please bring a chair. Immediately following the Rosary, there will be coffee and buns in the Convent. All are welcome.
- **What price would you pay for freedom? "For Greater Glory,"**(June 1) an impassioned group of men and women each make the decision to risk it all for family, faith and the very future of their country and *tells the story of the persecution of Catholics in Mexico during the 1920s, including the death of Father José María Robles Hurtado.* **Supreme Grand Knight, Carl A. Anderson** said "This year, with the release of *For Greater Glory*, the story of the struggle for religious freedom in Mexico will begin to be told. With religious freedom now an important issue of discussion here in the United States, every American who values faith and freedom should see this film. As we watch it, we should rejoice that we live in a country where we settle debates over religious liberty with ballots, not bullets, and in courtrooms rather than on battlefields. Seeing how Catholic Mexico remains today, this film also serves as a timely reminder that — from the earliest days of the Church's history to the present era — persecution does not stifle the faith, but emboldens it." Check the EWTN schedule for special programs and positive reviews on this film for all to see.
 
- **Knights of Fatima—7th Annual Pilgrimage—BLUE ARMY SHRINE** in Washington, New Jersey, **June 13**, Bus departs 8am So. 1st Street behind Linden Florist. \$30 pp—bring lunch—picnic grounds & snack bar on premise. For info call George at 226-3575.
- **Applications for Catholic Sports Camp** to be held at OLPH **July 23-27**, from 9am—1pm, can be picked up at the rectory. The Sports Camp is open to all Elementary School children in Kindergarten & up. Contact: Terry Hirten 631-957-6069 for more information.
- **The OLPH Community of Praise Prayer Group** meets Tuesday evenings at 7:45pm in the Convent Meeting Room. Please enter through the front Convent door. *All are welcome.*

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **HEALING MASS** at the *Immaculate Conception Center*, Douglaston Pkwy, Douglaston. Tuesday, **June 12** at 7pm. Rosary, Mass & Healing service celebrated by Fr. Augustine Fernando. For more info call: 718-229-8001.
- **American Polish Council of Long Island** will hold its Annual "Polish Day Picnic" **June 17th**, at Eisenhower Park, East Meadow from 9am until dusk at the Cherry Section, parking lot 5. *Admission and parking is free!*
- **Our Lady of Consolation** in West Islip, a 450-bed Nursing Home & Rehabilitation Facility, is in need of Eucharistic Ministers to help distribute communion to our bed-bound residents each day. If anyone wishes to volunteer or has any questions please contact the Pastoral Care Department at 631-587-1600 X 8297.
- **Family, Marriage and Individual Therapy**—provided by NYS licensed therapists available to our parish and 102 other parishes. Services provided by Catholic Counseling Center. Most insurance policies, including Medicare, are honored. Confidential information and appointments: call Dr. Giuliani 631-243-2503 or go to our website thecatholiccounselingcenter.com.
- **THE 2013 MASS BOOK WILL OPEN ON OR ABOUT JULY 10— THE EXACT DATE WILL BE PUBLISHED AT THE APPROVAL OF OUR NEW PASTOR.**

Readings for the Week—June 3—June 9 2012:**Sunday, June 3:** Dt 4:32-34, 39-40; Rom 8:14-17/ Mt 28:16-20**Monday, June 4:** 2 Pt 1:2-7/ Mk 12:1-12**Tuesday, June 5:** 2 Pt 3:12-15a, 17-18/ Mk 12:13-17**Wednesday, June 6:** 2 Tm 1:1-3, 6-12/ Mk 12:18-27**Thursday, May 31:** 2 Tm 2:8-15/ Mk 12:28-34**Friday, June 1:** 2 Tm 3:10-17/ Mk 12:35-37**Saturday, June 2:** 2 Tm 4:1-8/ Mk 12:38-44

Stop the HHS Mandate!
Stand Up for Religious Freedom!

June 8

Join the
Nationwide Rally for Religious Freedom
at Senators Schumer's and Gillibrand's
Offices in Melville

On **June 8**, tens of thousands of faithful citizens will gather in prayer and public witness in cities and towns all across the United States to oppose the HHS Mandate and stand up in defense of our religious freedoms.

Join the Rally in Melville and say NO to the new U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Mandate, which forces employers—including religious charities—to provide free contraceptives and abortion-inducing drugs in their health plans.

Stand Up for Religious Freedom Rally
Friday, June 8 at Noon

Where: Senators Charles Schumer's and
 Kirsten Gillibrand's Offices,
 145 Pinelawn Road, Melville, NY
Contact: Grace Colucci, gccolucci@aol.com
More Info: StandUpRally.com

Stand with our Church.
Stand with our Founding Fathers.
Stand up for Religious Freedom
Friday, June 8 at noon.



OFFICE OF FAITH FORMATION ✠ DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

PARISH STAFF MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS PLEASE JOIN US!

All who work with families come to share ideas, discuss challenges, and learn about exciting family programs happening throughout our diocese



STRENGTHENING & SUPPORTING THE FAMILY

FAMILY MINISTRY
NETWORK MEETINGS

AN INTIMATE COMMUNITY OF LIFE & LOVE

SHARING, SHAPING AND SHARPENING OUR MINISTRY TO FAMILIES

Day of Prayer: A time to reflect, renew, re-energize.

The Road Trip: Life's Lessons on the Journey

All parish volunteers and staff members are invited to join us.

Thursday, June 7, 2012**9:45 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.****Facilitator:** Kathleen Graviano author of "The Road Trip"**Shrine of Our Lady of the Island**

258 Eastport Manor Road

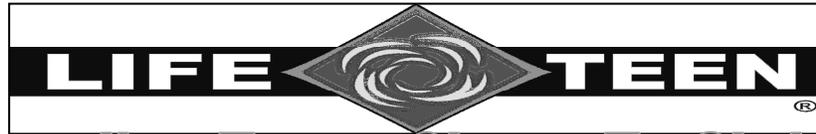
Manorville, NY 11949

631-325-0661

Room 15 - St. Bernadette Pilgrim Hall

Pass this information on to friends and colleagues.
There is no fee to attend this meeting. All are welcome to attend!
Please bring a lunch or it may be purchased in the cafeteria.

Please e-mail Debbie Coyne at dcoyne@drvc.org
 if you are planning to attend by June 4, 2012.



Leading Teens Closer To Christ

""Do everything calmly and peacefully. Do as much as you can as well as you can. Strive to see God in all things without exception, and consent to His will joyously. Do everything for God, uniting yourself to him in word and deed. Walk very simply with the Cross of the Lord and be at peace with yourself. "

- St. Francis de Sales

Tonight- Life Night- WORD

JUNE 10th - Senior Send Off Party!!!

Congrats to all those who made their Confirmation this week!! May the Holy Spirit guide you!!

Stay tuned for more events www.lifeteenolph.weebly.com

Are you in 8th - 12th grade? Bored on Sunday nights? Come to the Life Teen mass and our Life Night that starts at 6:15 in the convent basement. You won't be sorry, we have a group of 25-30 teens each week growing closer to Christ and making tons of friends along the way. Each week we have a different activity and theme, Summer BBQ's, and a retreat every year. Come once and I guarantee you will be hooked! Contact Brittany or Tom at OLPHLifeteen1@gmail.com



Are you an adult 20-35 interested in leading our teens closer to Christ and being an active part in our community here at OLPH? We are always looking for volunteers. f you would like to apply please contact Brittany or Tom at OLPHLifeteen1@gmail.com

Thank you to everyone who stopped by the car wash!!!



The Edge is for **all middle school age kids** – no matter where you go to school—this is the place for you! We meet in the basement of the Convent. Look for the blue door on the south side of the Convent. We meet from 7:30 til 8:45 pm. It's a great place to come, hang out, play great games and learn about our faith. **Just come on down**, no need to sign up!

NEXT EDGE DATE: Tuesday, June 12

Any 5th graders who would like to join us are also invited to come to Edge! Open to anyone in 6th, 7th and 8th grade! No cost! Just let us know you'll be here so we can plan food!

Email olphedge@gmail.com or call **226-6239** and leave message to let us know you'll be here!

Any questions call and leave a message for Peggy.



Society of St. Vincent de Paul : "WE HELP PEOPLE"

CANNED FRUIT, CEREAL, SHELF-STABLE MILK, POWDERED MILK, CANNED MEATS, INST. COFFEE JELLY, ONE-LB. BOXES SUGAR, JAR TOMATO SAUCE, CANNED MEALS WITH MEAT, RICE, ALL TYPES OF JUICES, PERSONAL CARE ITEMS, TOOTHPASTE, SHAMPOOS, SOAPS, TOILET TISSUE, PAPER TOWELS.

As we celebrate the mystery of the Trinity we also realize the mystery of how much God loves and cares for us each day. Believing in this our lives can then overflow in thanksgiving and praise.

Your gift, to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Poor Box will help the poor to believe in the mystery of God's love for them.

The office is open: **Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9 am—12 noon. Call 631-225-5531.**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REGISTRATION FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS AT OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP CHURCH

Registration for public-school students who will participate in the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Religious Education Program for the 2012-2013 academic year will be held on:

Monday, June 11	9:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M.
Tuesday, June 12	9:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M.
Wednesday, June 13	4:00 P.M. TO 8:00 P.M.
Thursday, June 14	9:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M.
Saturday, June 16	9:00 A.M. TO 12:00 P.M.

The Religious Education Office is located at 260 South Wellwood Avenue.

Parents with a child who will be in the first grade in September 2012 should register the child for religious instruction at this time.

All students entering first grade in any of the Lindenhurst Public Schools and residing within the parish boundaries who wish to make First Communion at the regular time in the second grade must be registered on one of the dates mentioned above and must regularly attend both the first and second grade of the Religious Education Program. Students entering grades 2-8 who did not attend the OLPH program in the past academic year (2011-2012) must also register on the above dates.

Parents registering their children for the first time must bring the original copy of the child's Baptismal Certificate as a requirement for registration, unless the child was baptized in OLPH Church.

For further information, please call the OLPH **Religious Education Office** at **226-2384**.

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M. Wednesdays from 4:30 to 8:30 P.M.



Upcoming Activities for Family Life: ***Fathers Day, June 19***
We invite all Dad's, Grandfathers and Godfathers to join us at the 9:30 a.m. Family Mass. At the conclusion of the Mass we will be giving out vegetable plants.

July: We begin our "No Vacation for the Hungry".

August: Back to School Time Collection.

PARISH SPIRITUAL ADOPTION PROGRAM

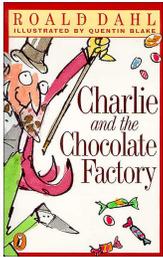
MONTH 3 – Developing Baby -- "I can suck my thumb!"



Your baby is quite active in the womb now -although her mother won't feel her for another couple of months. If her mother's womb had a window, you could watch your spiritually adopted baby squint, swallow and move her tongue. She can make a tight fist if you touch her palm. She is breathing amniotic fluid which continues until birth, although she obtains the oxygen her body needs through the umbilical cord. The baby you are praying for weighs one ounce.

A word from Pope John Paul II to those suffering because of abortion:
"Do not give in to discouragement and do not lose hope... The Father of mercies is ready to give you his forgiveness and peace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation."
(The Gospel of Life, no. 99)

SCHOOL NEWS



Grade 6 - Language Arts - Students read a play version of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." They have been reading to bring these characters to life in the classroom.



Grade 7- Language Arts - Students have nearly completed the story of the Iliad and the Trojan War. They chose their favorite hero, the mighty Greek Achilles or the noble and brave Prince Hector. They wrote an essay on the characteristics they admired in their heroes.



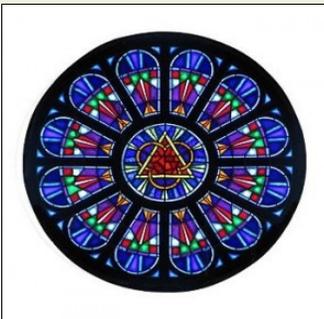
OLPH CYO Spring Track Award Winners

- Boys—Runner of the Year—**SHAYNE WARTA**
- Girls - Runner of the Year— **ANGELA BENETOS**
- Boys—Most Improved—**ERIK BROOKS**
- Girls—Most Improved—**NICOLE BAEZ**
- Sportsmanship— **HANNAH VOLPE**
- Honorable Mention—

JAELYN LAWTON KEVIN CUNNINGHAM ISAIAH JOHNSON EMILY JOHNSON

June 3, 2012 – The Solemnity of the Holy Trinity

Dt 4:32-34, 39-40; Ps 33:4-5, 6, 9, 18-19, 20, 22; Rom 8:14-17; Mt 28:16-20



Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity — one of the central mysteries of our faith. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — three persons in one God. It is a hard reality for our human minds to grasp and yet we know, in faith that it is true, because Jesus Christ revealed it to us. In each of the readings for today, we get a glimpse of that revelation. In the first reading, we hear Moses assure the Israelites that there is but One God. "This is why you must now know that the Lord is God, in the heavens above and on the earth below, and that there is no other," he tells them.

Then, in Paul's letter to the Romans, we hear it proclaimed that it is the Spirit who allows us to call God "Abba, Father," and that as children of God we are "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." Here we see Father, Son, and Spirit, but we know that He is one God. In the Gospel, Jesus confirms this for us. "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" — three persons in one God. In His very nature, then, God is a family of persons, united in love. He is a family of persons, in fact, whose life IS love. And though it is a hard reality for us to truly understand (hence it's nature as a mystery of the faith), in revealing the reality to us, Christ not only shows us who God is, He also shows us who we are called to be. "Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them..." we are called to live as a family of persons, to bring others into Communion with God and His Church, and to do so in a loving manner. Our lives should mirror the life of the Trinity insofar as we live in love with others. We live out of love for others. As disciples of Christ, we go out into the world and "make disciples." we call others to Christ. We invite others into a life of sacramental graces, a life through which they can be more fully united to God here and now. And we recognize that, as we carry out this mission, the Lord remains with us — Father, Son, and Spirit. So today, as we reflect on the life and the mystery of the Holy Trinity, let us take time to reflect on how we are carrying out our mission as Christian disciples. Are we using our God-given time, talents, and treasure to make disciples and build the Church, and in so doing giving glory to the One God?

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

understanding the basics ▪ defending a right

Safeguarding America's Foundation (5 of 7)

One of the greatest characteristics that defines our nation's heritage is the religious freedom that is granted to all Americans as a fundamental right by the Constitution of the United States. That right, as Professor Mary Ann Glendon points out, has served as the hallmark of a democratic society and "enabled this nation's diverse religions to flourish and coexist in relative harmony." Expressing the implications of this freedom, Thomas Jefferson said it best when he assured the Ursuline Sisters of Louisiana in the early 1800s (who ran hospitals, orphanages, and schools) that the principles of the Constitution were a "sure guarantee" that their ministry – which served not only Catholics but people of all faith traditions – would always be "free to govern itself according to its own voluntary rules, without interference of civil authority."

This fundamental freedom, clearly articulated by President Jefferson, has been our country's lifeblood. It has supported and nourished the foundation of who we are as a nation. It has enabled all believers to bring the experience of their Sabbath into the daily life of the nation. In short, it has allowed all to practice what they believe. It has enabled Catholics over the centuries to be about the works of charity our faith demands and minister to Christ in the least of our brothers and sister, regardless of their creed. This work continues today.

Catholic hospitals bring healing to countless people, including the poor, the marginalized, and the disadvantaged.

Catholic Relief Services aids millions of people in this country and abroad in the worst moments of their lives.

Catholic Charities works tirelessly in trying to reduce poverty, respond to the needs of the poor, and to build up healthy communities.

All of this, of course, was made possible because of our nation's understanding of religious liberty. As Professor Glendon points out, even non-believers admit this fact. Jürgen Habermas, a German philosopher and atheist, says in *An Awareness of what is Missing: faith and reason in a post secular age*: "Among the modern societies, only those that are able to introduce into the secular domain the essential contents of their religious traditions which point beyond the merely human realm will also be able to rescue the substance of the human." Society, it is clear, must be open to faith, as our nation has been since its inception. The HHS mandate issued by the Obama Administration marginalizes religion and reduces religious liberty. In doing so, it also threatens to shatter the bedrock that enables every citizen – of every faith – to pursue life, liberty, and happiness according to the moral convictions prescribed by their faith. Defending our religious liberty means safeguarding America's foundation.

for further information visit www.usccb.org and www.drvc.org

"As a community of faith, we must commit ourselves to prayer and fasting that wisdom and justice may prevail and religious liberty may be restored."

Bishop William Murphy

PRAYER

Almighty God, Father of all nations, for freedom you have set us free in Christ Jesus (Gal 5:1).

We praise and bless you for the gift of religious liberty, the foundation of human rights, justice, and the common good. Grant to our leaders the wisdom to protect and promote our liberties; By your grace may we have the courage to defend them, for ourselves and for all those who live in this blessed land.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, our patroness, and in the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, with whom you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.