

## *News for the Pews*

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October 31, 2020

October has seemingly been about 39 days long this year rather than 31, maybe because I've constantly had to rebuild my supply of Halloween candy for all the trick-or-treaters we're expecting at the Vaught homestead. SOMEBODY keeps eating it. October at St. Mary's wasn't very busy, but by 2020 pandemic standards it was a whirlwind. The biggest event was the wedding of Katherine Ramey and Joey Pitts on October 17. I was playing around in Fayetteville that weekend, but they got hitched anyway. I did make it back Sunday afternoon for Father Jerome's 'fireside chat' about prayer, although the threat of rain forced us to hold it indoors. It was very interesting and inspiring; we hardly noticed the smoke. The CYM had an outdoor movie (and hot chocolate) event after Mass on October 24.

This weekend promises to be quite busy by most standards. As noted last month, Father Pius has resumed his practice of blessing those married during the month (November) and those seeking the sacrament of the sick at Masses over the first weekend of the month. Unfortunately, the parish isn't getting to throw our big Halloween party this year, but folks will be getting together, I'm sure. **DON'T FORGET TO SET YOUR CLOCKS BACK TONIGHT.**

Tomorrow, (Sunday 11/1 at 2:00 pm) will feature our annual parish visit to the cemetery. We will once again remember and pray for our many loved ones. As pointed out previously, if you place a flower arrangement on the grave or marker of a relative or ancestor, please write their name on the bottom, so I can replace it properly if the wind blows it off. The cemetery visit will be followed by a 5:00 pm Adoration Hour sponsored by the CYM. The music-guided service will focus upon prayers for our nation ahead of Tuesday's election.

The following photograph captures a close-up of the only image of a horse in St. Mary's Church. Where can it be found?



We normally give Father Pius and Deacon Brian the day off on Monday, but since November 2 is the Feast of All Souls, Father will celebrate three Masses, at 7:30 am, at 10:00 am and at 5:00 pm. That will also mark the start of Father Pius's Novena Masses for the Faithful Departed (ending on November 10).

The Mass Novena will neatly include the 7:30 am Mass on the morning of Saturday November 7, which will also be celebrated as part of the Five First Saturday's devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. If that isn't enough incentive to come, the Daughters of Mary will hold their November meeting after Mass that morning. They are collecting annual dues at this time, so members can pay those at the meeting or mail them to Trish Alston or Megan Mayeaux. Dues are stunningly low at \$5.00/year. In providing this info Megan wished we could encourage donations to the various organizations. I think that's a great idea. Although all the groups have ways and means of raising funds, an occasional donation from individual parishioners could give them some financial cushion as they carry out their service missions.

The scripture study group continued the the 10-week "Consoling the Heart of Jesus" program during October. We meet after Wednesday Mass, but due to next Wednesday's (11/4) Knights of Columbus meeting and Election Day on 11/3, we will meet at 6:00 pm on Monday, 11/2. That will fit well for those who attend 5:00 Mass that evening. We'll return to our regular schedule on November 11 and November 18, then celebrate the program's successful conclusion on the Feast of Christ the King. We have agreed that this program is one of the best we've ever done. We will be offering it again early next year.

RCIA classes continue meeting at 6:00 pm on Thursday evenings in the hall. As mentioned previously, Noel and Lauri Sagullo have taken over teaching the class from Deacon Brian, thereby reducing his heavy workload. They are bright and energetic and are real assets to our parish. All are invited to attend if they're interested in learning more about their faith, about its beliefs and the reasons underlying all it does and stands for. At least pray for those thinking of joining the Catholic Church, their sponsors and teachers.

As noted above, the Knights of Columbus will hold their usual monthly meeting after 6:00 pm Mass next Wednesday (11/4). We have

discussed holding our traditional "Breakfast with Santa" get-together in early December again this year, but the recent COVID resurgence seems likely to cause that to be canceled as well.

Of course, there's a huge gap in the parish calendar due to the cancellation of the Thanksgiving Celebration this year. I believe it's been happening for at least 100 years, thinking that if we ever advertised, or were able to get a local TV crew to come and do a story about it, we could make that claim. An item in the Spectator last year (or was it in late 2018?) indicated that it was not held during WWII (maybe 1942-44). Still, that's an awfully long string to be breaking.

As one might expect, the parish usually reaps a large financial harvest from the celebration each year, and it will miss that income. This is particularly true this year, since the cancellation of masses last spring and the light attendance experienced since then has diminished weekly donations. Many have continued donating generously, but the shortfall is being felt. The parish isn't suffering all that badly, but it is having to draw upon its reserves.

With this in mind, we are asking all parishioners to prayerfully consider making a Thanksgiving donation to the church equivalent to the amount of money you would donate and/or spend at the Thanksgiving Celebration. We certainly realize the times are tough for many, so we're not asking that folks give until it hurts. But we are asking you to give from your bounty. You will have our most sincere thanks.

So, where's that there horse, Podner? I find it interesting, that the only place it shows up is in the twelfth (12th) station, "Jesus Dies on the Cross." It may simply be that it's the only station that gives the artist the opportunity to extend his viewpoint upward due to Jesus' elevated position. Conversely, given the rampant symbolism within the artwork of the church, one has to wonder if there's some other meaning to the horse's presence in the 12<sup>th</sup> station. Any idea? I'd love to hear it.

Daniel "Thanks for Noticin' Me" Vaught