



From The Heart

Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Oberlin, Ohio

Spring 2017

Lent — from Ashes to Easter

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As we each find our own ways to mark the season of Lent, we follow in the footsteps of centuries of Christians who have spent time preparing to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus. A little background on how this special season came about may be helpful. The earliest official mention of Lent comes from the year 325 when the Council of Nicaea talked about a 40-day period to prepare for Easter. As Lent began to take form throughout the Church, the Scriptural admonition to fast, to pray and to give alms became practices that were adopted as appropriate expressions of a Lenten discipline. Much earlier, Christians had introduced Easter Sunday as the annual celebration of Jesus conquering death. Soon afterward, as Easter drew near every year, many Christian communities began to observe a period to focus their attention more deeply on Christ's sacrificial death and glorious resurrection. Today we refer to this as Holy Week, with the final three days being called the Sacred Triduum, that is, the "Three Days" of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. The respective Triduum liturgies of the Mass of the Lord's Supper, the Celebration of the Lord's Passion and the Easter Vigil Mass grew as ways to enter more deeply into what these great events mean.

Perhaps we can see the Council of Nicaea in 325 and the Second Vatican Council in the lifetime of many of us as the two poles in the history of Lent. Nicaea acknowledged its existence while Vatican II confirmed its importance. At this last Council much was said about the need to control the desires of the body, to show sorrow for our sins and to express Jesus' love for the poor. There can be no better time than Lent to make this effort.

This same Council also resurrected the ancient practice of receiving new members (called catechumens) into the Church at the Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday night. For centuries this was deemed the most fitting time to baptize adults who had been preparing for as long as three years to be welcomed into the Church. However, over the centuries, as infant baptism gradually became more prominent, the lengthy process of adult preparation became less and less used until eventually it was abandoned and forgotten. Vatican II restored this process called the Catechumenate or the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) as the norm for bringing adults into the Church. What more fitting time to unite people to the risen Christ through the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) than when the Church solemnly gathers to commemorate and celebrate Christ's Resurrection. This divine gift has been shared with us as God's ultimate Grace for it joins us to Him and to one another.

As we move into the holy season of Lent, may we make a serious effort to wean ourselves from sinfulness and selfishness through prayer, self-denial and acts of charity so that the celebration of Jesus' new life will be the celebration of our new life as well.

Fr. Cole

"Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people, and hallelujah is our song." (Pope John Paul II)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mar. 19-21	Parish mission (2 p.m. on Sunday; 7 p.m. on Monday/Tuesday) Details below. *
March 31	Fish fry
April 2	Communal penance, 1:00 p.m. at St. Patrick's
April 7	Fish fry
April 8	Faith Is Fun!*
Apr. 22-23	Men's retreat*
May 7	First Holy Communion Mass
May 20	Faith Is Fun!*
May 21	Parish Nurse Program Blood-Draw*
June 1	Parish bus trip to Columbus*

* See article in this newsletter for details.

FREE BLOOD PANEL

Mercy Health Ministry/Parish Nursing Program will be offering a free blood screening in our education building from 9:30 a.m. until noon on Sunday, May 21st. This testing is valued at several hundred dollars per person and will involve a blood-draw by Mercy professionals to screen for the following: CMP (kidney and liver function, sugar and protein levels in blood, electrolyte and fluid balance); lipids (cholesterol, HDL, LDL, triglycerides); HgA1c (90-day blood glucose average); TSH (thyroid); and PSA (for men over 40). Blood pressure check will also be included.

Those who want to participate are encouraged to fast and take their morning medications with water, if possible. We are limited to 30 "customers," so signing up in advance is encouraged. No sign-ups will be taken before Easter, so put a reminder on your calendar and watch for the appointment sheet at the south entrance of the church Monday, April 17th. If you're unable to get to the church to sign up, please call 440-647-3251 *after Easter*. Be sure to leave your name and phone number on your message. You will receive a call-back to arrange a time.

Lenten Mission 2017

**Sacred Heart Church in Oberlin is having
a Lenten Mission!**

Please save the dates and times shown below.

Our presenter is Fr. Norm Douglas, a very dynamic speaker.

More information will follow so watch our web site at :

<http://sacredheartoberlin.org/>

Sunday March 19 - 2:00 PM

Monday March 20 - 7:00PM

Tuesday March 21 - 7:00PM

ADULTS ONLY!

We have a group in the parish which is strictly for unattached adults. It's called the Majority of One, and if you're single, divorced, or widowed, you are cordially invited to join.

What's the purpose of the group? To have fun. To enjoy each other's company. We eat together, usually once a month, usually dinner, although we've been known to have breakfast together from time to time.

Where is it we go? Among other places, Lorenzo's, Ziggy's, Moosehead, Jackalope, Michelle's, Blue Sky, Wasabi Steakhouse, Red Robin, and the Olive Garden. From time to time, we venture further away: for instance, to Stan Hywet Hall and dinner in Akron, or for a ride on the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad and lunch at the Winkin' Lizard. Last August, we went on the parish bus trip into Cleveland. We've had potlucks in the education building, held a Trivial Pursuit tournament, played charades (pretty badly), and had an evening of board games.

One of the attractions of being part of this group – besides the good company, good food, and fellowship with really nice (and fun) people – is that there are NO MEETINGS! Imagine that. All you have to do is watch the bulletins for announcements about upcoming get-togethers, and be sure to get your reservations in on time! If you'd like to receive electronic notices about activities, just send your email address to proofit1@gmail.com.

Faith is Fun!

That's the message delivered by Olivia Sliman during an evening of faith-filled fun she presented to over 100 participants on December 3rd in the Sacred Heart Education Building after a supper of pizza, salads, and desserts.

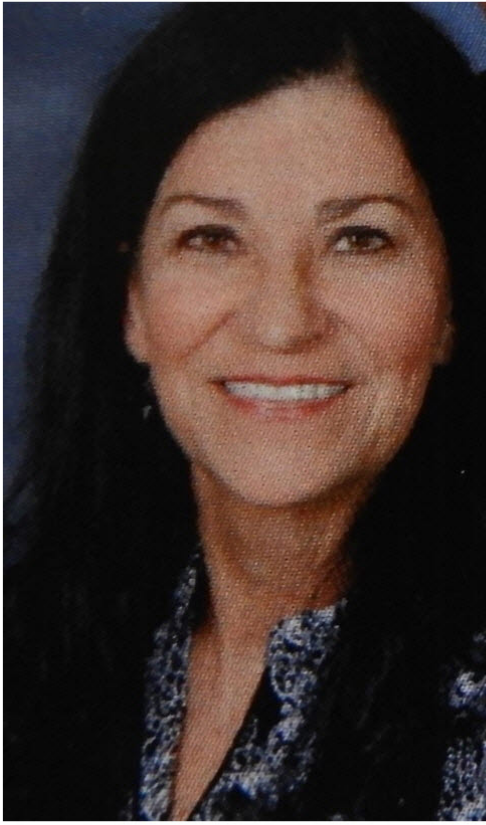
Through skits, song and dance, and audience participation, Olivia urged those attending to find joy in Catholic Christian life: "No matter where we are in our lives," she said, "we should dream big. I don't think our dreams will come true unless we are active in pursuing them." We are asked to keep this in mind: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)

Given the enthusiastic response to her first presentation, Olivia has been invited by Sacred Heart to present follow-up programs -- Faith is Fun Group events -- Saturdays after the 5:00 p.m. Mass on April 8th and May 20th. Each evening will include a light meal (pizza or soup/bread, beverages, etc.) followed by the program.

Olivia describes the Faith is Fun Group as "a place for sharing and laughing, through which we can grow in our faith life and learn from each other new ways to incorporate God and positivity into our everyday routine." The format of each evening will include an introductory song and skit; a short, animated message (such as "God is all around us"); discussions and group sharing (on a subject such as how you've seen God working in daily life); an activity with prizes (raffle, game, group competition, something involving movement); and a closing segment led by Olivia.

**Mark your calendars and join us for these Faith is Fun! events:
April 8 and May 20!**

By Susan Hanko.



I was born in Omaha, Nebraska. I was third oldest, my five siblings being brothers. I lived in Omaha until I was five, and then we moved to Hazelcrest, Illinois, a southern suburb of Chicago. After five years there, I moved to North Olmsted, Ohio.

I attended the public schools of North Olmsted and then attended college at Cleveland State University. In January 1971, my sophomore year, I met my first love, Tom. We were married that December, 45-plus years ago. I was a teenager when we married; I am now the proud owner of a Medicare Card.

I was raised in the Lutheran Church; however, we married in the Catholic Church. I attended Mass every week with Tom and our “Catholic” children but did not convert to Catholicism until our seventh year of marriage. (Tom has the patience of Job.)

Little girls have dreams, and mine were to marry, have lots of children, and become a grandma. God blessed me, and my dreams came true. I have Tom, three children, and eleven grandchildren ... all of whom live less than ten minutes from our home. Our youngest daughter, Emily, and her husband, Nick, and their children, Abby, Danny, and Casey, are members of Sacred Heart.

I was a full-time mom until the children were older. I worked twelve years as a swing manager at McDonald’s and fourteen in classrooms for the Berea Children’s Home.

I retired almost three years ago. I love to travel. I love gardening and canning my tomatoes. I volunteer in my grandchildren’s classrooms. I am a great cheerleader at all their sporting events and band and choir concerts.

Tom and I have been members of Sacred Heart for the past six years, and I am looking forward to the years to come.

Margee Daw

*“The Christian should be an alleluia from head to foot.”
(St. Augustine)*

APOSTOLATE ON BEHALF OF A REFUGEE FAMILY

It appears that our parish’s apostolate to sponsor a refugee family has been delayed. We are still hoping to host a family which has already been thoroughly vetted and processed. However, factual information about this possibility is scarce at this time. Our parish team is ready and we are trying to stay as close to the situation as we can.

Parish Picnic

Every year at the end of June we have a tradition of celebrating our parish anniversary with an outdoor Sunday Mass followed by a picnic. It has always been a wonderful way to help us remember who we are and from where we came. Over the years we had the picnic in our pavilion on the north side of the church. However, two years ago we had to remove the pavilion to make room for our new rectory/office building. As a result the picnic was moved into our Education Building. While we did cook the food outdoors, we all ate inside which didn't provide much of a picnic atmosphere.

After discussion with Parish Council we have decided to move the picnic this coming June to the New Russia Township Lodge Picnic Shelter. We'll still have our outdoor Mass on the front lawn of our church, but after the liturgy we'll drive the short distance to the wonderful facility they have on Butternut Ridge. I encourage you to check it out in advance. You'll find they have a baseball field, a large playground for the children, plenty of restrooms, as well as plenty of parking. I think this new venue will serve us well, and I'm looking forward to hearing what you think.

Meanwhile, I will be consulting with both Finance Council and Parish Council regarding the feasibility and practicality of constructing a modest new pavilion near the Education Building, which will give it proximity to restrooms and our parish kitchen. I will be sharing more about this as these discussions unfold.

Fr. Cole

Men's Renewal

Calling all men 21 and over. I invite you to approximately 30 hours of fellowship, food, fun, and a chance to relax in the love of God.

There is no pre-requisite other than Baptism. This is a unique opportunity for the young and old:
 who know God but maybe haven't spoken in awhile; or,
 who know God but want to grow more in their relationship with him; or,
 who may be lost and not sure what the next step is; or
 who may be unsure they want a relationship with God; or
 who just want 30 hours away from the day-to-day turmoil of their lives.

This gathering of 25 men will journey through activities together and, while doing so, also have time to relax and reflect, eat heartily, and possibly even sleep.

The renewal will be held at St. Joseph Church in Amherst. It begins Saturday, April 22, at 8:00 a.m. You will eat lunch, dinner and snacks on Saturday. Luxurious air mattresses will be provided for your sleeping pleasure Saturday night. Sunday will include breakfast and lunch. There will also be the opportunity to join in the celebration of Sunday Mass. The renewal will end early in the afternoon on Sunday, April 23.

Applications are available at the parish office, or can be printed from the parish website. If you have questions, call Deacon Tom at 440-655-0647.

The cost is ZERO!!! No Charge!!! Free!!

A CONVERT STORY

“We don’t know why you’re Catholic,” one of my nephews wrote to me some time ago. I tried to explain to him, as well as to other members of my family, how a self-respecting, Bible-believing Baptist girl ended up worshipping with “papists,” as my father disparagingly described Catholics.

I married a Catholic. We attended Mass together before we married, and we continued doing so afterward. I didn’t have the foggiest idea of what was going on; it was entirely foreign to my experience of church. It didn’t seem friendly; the people seemed not to think about what they said or did – it was all memorized ... no spontaneity; and the music was sung in unison rather than in beautiful four-part harmony, which was what I was used to.

We had a beautiful baby girl that first year; she was baptized at Sacred Heart, as we were temporarily living in an upstairs farmhouse apartment east of Oberlin. We moved to Wellington, and I started thinking I should learn something about the church in which our children would be raised. Back then, at least at our local parish, there was no such thing as RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults); instead, I took “instructions in the faith,” a series of classes given by the pastor. I don’t think I realized it was anything more than just instructions. When I realized everyone else he was teaching planned to join the Catholic church that Easter, I explained to him I couldn’t do it – it was too big a leap for me, even though I’d been surprised that much of what Catholics believed was what I myself already believed. He was very gracious about it, and I was so grateful for his patience and understanding.

Time – years, in fact – passed. We added two sons to our family. I continued studying Catholicism, and I prayed for guidance and answers to my questions and doubts. I couldn’t say yes to joining, yet I couldn’t walk away and go back to the Baptist church.

Before I married, I’d signed a paper saying I wouldn’t interfere with our potential offspring being raised Catholic. I took that very seriously, so seriously that, even when the marriage ended, I continued taking the children to Mass. It was all still pretty mystifying to me, but I understood it a little better, and that helped.

At long last, I could no longer deny the truth of what Catholics believed regarding the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and that this was, indeed, the one church founded by Christ on Peter, the Rock. After all, Jesus had made it all so clear in holy scripture, had He not? And, as a Bible believer, my decision to join had to be based on what I could find in scripture. It was, as they say, as if scales fell from my eyes. Everything fell into place. It finally made sense.

There were a couple of other considerations, though -- reality checks, if you will. Joining the Catholic church would mean not being allowed to marry again, and there I was – on my way to divorce court with three very small children to raise. In addition, my own father, whom I loved and respected so much, was the most anti-Catholic person I knew. What would he say? What would he do? Would he hate me? Turn his back on me?

I had a choice to make: to keep my option to remarry open ... to keep in my father’s good graces ... or to follow my mind and heart to Rome – to Jesus and His church. How could I choose anything or anyone over God? Impossible.

The priest who’d given me instructions had moved to Arizona, but we’d kept in touch. He was, by then, the godfather of my younger son. I told him of my decision, and he rejoiced with me. He arranged long-distance for me to be baptized right here at Sacred Heart by Fr. Bonnell. It was August 11, 1977. I stood at the baptismal font with my sponsor and my daughter, Susan. I was 28 years old, and it was the happiest day of my life. At long last, I belonged to Christ and to His church. The following week, at a cousin’s wedding, I received Jesus in holy communion for the first time.

The Catholic church and I have not always seen eye-to-eye. I’ve left and come back, left and come back. It’s been a bumpy road, to say the least, but even in the bad times, I believed God, in His great kindness and mercy, was holding me on a sort of long, invisible tether. I could feel it, and He keeps drawing me back because He knows this is where I belong. This is home.

Carrol Wilhelm

“To become a Catholic is not to leave off thinking, but to learn how to think.” (Chesterton)

PARISH BUS TRIP

For our third annual bus outing, we're planning a trip to Columbus. We'll be touring the Jubilee Museum of Catholic Culture, then heading to German Village for lunch and to explore this historic area. Details are still being worked out, but the date is set: Thursday, June 1st. The cost for transportation will be \$30 per person. A donation of \$5 for students and seniors and \$10 per person for all others is requested for the museum, and we'll each be on our own for lunch. PLEASE NOTE: The museum is NOT handicap accessible. Payment will be due by May 18th. Checks should be made out to SACRED HEART CHURCH and can be mailed to 410 West Lorain [rectory office], Oberlin, OH 44074, or placed in the collection basket. Be sure to mark the envelope BUS TRIP. If paying by cash, please include your name and contact information with the envelope. This opportunity is open to non-parishioners, so feel free to invite other friends and family.

RECOMMENDED READING AND VIEWING*

Coming Home to Your True Self, by Albert Haase, OFM (IVPress).

The book is an invitation to return home and it shows you the way to get there. He explains that home is living in the presence of God and it's only there that we discover our true self. Rich with Fr. Haase's insights and stories, it is a fine guidebook for those who want a deeper relationship with the Lord.

St. Peter: The Salvation of Many. The Sacrifice of One. Starring Omar Sharif, this Lionsgate DVD story of St. Peter begins with the crucifixion of Christ and ends with his own crucifixion in Rome. It brings to life a view of the beginnings of the Church, early persecutions, the conversion of Saul, Christians' respect and reverence for Jesus' mother, and the sacrifices followers of Christ had to make to follow their beliefs. There are many flashbacks, so viewers will have to pay attention. Rated PG-13 for some violent images.

John XXIII. Ed Asner and Massimo Ghini star in an Ignatius Press video that tells the story of Angelo Roncalli, the fourth of fourteen children born to a sharecropper's family, from his boyhood days through the end of his papacy in 1963. This is an inspirational look at the humble, strong, and obedient man who called the Second Vatican Council. He is venerated not only in the Roman Catholic Church, but also by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Anglican Church of Canada, and the Episcopal Church of the United States. Not rated.

Bread and Wine: Readings for Lent and Easter. Reflections by C.S. Lewis, Philip Yancey, G.K. Chesterton, Henri Nouwen, and many others. (Orbis Books)

Love Unveiled: The Catholic Faith Explained, by Edward Sri (Ignatius Press). "He reveals the Catholic Faith as not just a set of beliefs but a lifestyle filled with love." [John Bergsma, Franciscan University of Steubenville faculty.]

*These DVDs and books will be on loan from the parish library (top shelf). Please use and return them in a timely way so others can check them out.

"Stupidity is also a gift of God, but one mustn't misuse it." (John Paul II)

Meet Your Ushers and Collection Counters, Part 3

Being an usher requires a devotion and a commitment of time by those who serve regularly every weekend. Just as there is a group of parishioners who routinely serve as ushers and collection counters for Sunday Mass, there is also a dedicated group who serve at the Saturday Mass. You will meet three of our Saturday ushers in this issue, then we will get to know the others with the final installment of this series in the next issue.



Joseph McCormick, Jr., is a familiar face to many here. He began attending Sacred Heart occasionally in 1975 with his then wife-to-be, Elsie Lawson. Joe and Elsie were married in 1980, with the Rev. Fr. Bonnell officiating, and Joe has been a full-time member of the parish since then. He began serving as an usher about 12 years ago. One of the things he likes about being an usher is that it allows him to meet many more parishioners than he normally would as just an attendee at Mass. Plus, he says ushering is an “easily definable” ministry because the responsibilities are for Mass times only. The ushers generally also handle the duty of counting the weekly collection for that Mass; Joe believes collection counting is just “a natural continuation of ushering and a logical extension of the position.”

Joe was raised in the metropolitan New York area and came to Ohio as a result of a business transfer after receiving his BA in accounting. He recounts that his boss told him he was “too qualified” and was being moved to the company’s headquarters; thus, Joe found himself working for Abex in Elyria after inquiring, “Where’s Elyria?” Joe says it was “quite a downshift in lifestyle and pace of living,” but he believes he adapted to the change very well. He says he always envisioned going back to his hometown in New York someday, but after attending his 50th high school reunion and seeing the pace at which people there lived, he realized he was quite content to remain a resident of Ohio. He says when the Lord calls him home, he believes he will be buried from Sacred Heart parish, far from his birthplace of Buffalo. His wife, Elsie, passed away in 2009. He has two stepchildren, two step-grandchildren, and one step-great-grandchild.

If you call the parish office, you might speak to Joe since he helps out there a couple of days a week. He is a lector and Eucharistic minister and serves at the funeral Masses. Additionally, he distributes communion at Welcome Nursing Home and previously served on parish council. He arranges for the Giving Tree at Christmas “with help” he says, so that residents of Welcome Nursing Home and shut-ins of the parish receive gifts. In his spare time, Joe enjoys reading and stamp collecting. He jokingly says his stamp collection is “for sale” and that he needs to downsize it due to the large number of stamps he has collected over the years.

David Foos has been serving as an usher for 2 or 3 years and normally serves at the Saturday Mass. He has been a member of Sacred Heart since about 2000. He had previously lived in Huron County, but when he moved closer to Oberlin, he joined our parish. Like many others, David was drafted into ushering by someone who was already serving the ministry; in this case, it was John Leek.

David works for Oberlin College as an analyst programmer. His undergraduate concentration was in economics and math, and he has an MBA in computing and information. He has been employed at the college since 1985, except for a brief hiatus. David says his job has changed a lot over the years. However, when asked about retirement, he unhesitatingly says he has no plans to retire.



(David continued) In his spare time, he likes to do yard work. He says he also likes to attend plays, mostly in Cleveland.

David's quiet efficiency has been evident in his contributions to the parish. He served as secretary for parish council for four years or so and also sat on finance council. David has helped with IHN and makes out the monthly schedule for lectors and Eucharistic ministers.



Bernie Garrah fills in as an usher when needed and regularly helps with collection counting after Saturday Mass. He was a member of the parish from 1973 until 1988, when he left the area due to job duties. He returned in 2001 and has been a member of the parish since then. He has been assisting with collection counting since Father Cole asked him to serve as a replacement for those who had retired from the ministry. That was 8 or 9 months ago.

Bernie and his wife, Sharon, were married almost 51 years -- until Sharon passed away in April 2015. Bernie says one of the reasons he agreed to help with ushering/collection counting was because of how Father Cole had helped them in the time before Sharon died. He said he "wanted to give back" and serving in this capacity was a way to do that. Bernie has two adult children, a son and a daughter, and four grandchildren.

Trained as an aircraft mechanic while in the Air Force, Bernie began working for United Airlines as a mechanic in 1964. During his 37 years with United, he worked in San Francisco, Detroit, Minneapolis, Cleveland, and Washington DC. He retired in 2001 but says he enjoyed every minute of his job. He says he worked "because I liked my job. I never hated going to work." He says every day was different because he got to work on different planes and was challenged with different problems. During his career, he saw the birth of the 737, saw United begin using that fleet, and saw the 737 retired. Throughout his time with United, Bernie worked on a number of different airplanes and saw several fleets of planes retire.

One of Bernie's hobbies is boating, although he is not actively involved with it right now. He says he and Sharon had a boat for four seasons and just enjoyed being out on it. Pride and fond memories were evident when Bernie talked about the times they spent on their 23' Yamaha twin-engine jet boat.

Kathy Gulish

FAMILY PROMISE 1st ANNUAL REVERSE RAFFLE

If you'd like to help support Family Promise, please buy a ticket and join us on Saturday, March 18, from 6-11 p.m. at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, 333 South Lake, South Amherst.

A \$100 ticket includes a chance at winning the reverse raffle (possible \$5000 or more payout). Also included in the evening is an all-you-can eat corned beef buffet, mashed potato bar, cabbage and noodles, macaroni and cheese, hors d'oeuvres, and entertainment.

\$20 guest tickets are available with the purchase of the \$100 ticket. Each guest ticket includes the buffet, entertainment, and entry into a side raffle. Side boards and other raffles will also be available during this BYOB event.

Join the fun and support our community and homeless families!

For more information, or to purchase tickets, please call Family Promise (440-774-6743), Jack or Sue Kubicki (216-210-0186), or Chuck Leverknight (440-537-5791).

Jesus Is Watching You

I'm always a bit hesitant to reveal my Lenten intentions to anyone because it's only a matter of time before I succumb to inevitable failure. When it comes to Lenten success, my glass is forever half empty. Except for this year, because for these forty days my glass will be entirely empty.

Goodbye, Cabernet Sauvignon. Goodbye, Merlot. Five weeks isn't especially a long time. Except for the hours between nine and ten p.m. Surprisingly, my Lenten decision was met with much resistance at home.

"Well," John said, pouring me a cup of coffee, "my life is over."
 "Aren't you being just a bit dramatic?" I asked through blurry eyes.
 Almost on bended knee he pleaded, "Please, don't give up wine! Think of your family!"

I wonder, is this how Jesus felt when he cued his disciples in on his plans for Easter weekend?

At work, when I told my friend Faith of my intention, she said, "No way am I giving up wine. I know Jesus died on the cross for us and all, but there is a limit!" Another asked me if I meant to give up all types of alcohol. Funny, I wasn't aware there was anything but.

At home, some of the kids fear I am pregnant. The last time I took a wine sabbatical, Max followed. With the exception of 9 p.m., I am steadfast and determined. I silently chant. *I will be fine. My family will be fine. And Jesus will be proud of me.*

"Jesus doesn't like a quitter," John informed me.

Yep, Jesus had his disciples and I have my family. It's a stretch but so is my time out here in the desert.

What do I really expect to get out of the Lenten season of deprivation? I'd like to say it's the virtue of temperance and a star in my heavenly crown, but I know, and more importantly, Jesus knows, that's just not true.

What I really expect is to be twenty pounds lighter by Easter Sunday, but I'd settle for ten. And in the meantime, I'll be sure to show up for Mass every week. There's a chalice with my name on it.

Marla Thompson

A Thought for Lent

Someone once said that to recognize the signs of God, pay attention to your stirrings. Look closely when you feel the swell of joy within, or the tightness as your throat closes up in sorrow. Live in that moment, poke around in its corners, and feel the texture of its walls. Sit with it for awhile, long enough to sense the presence of God sitting with you.

A NEW FEATURE!

It was suggested we interview parishioners who have come to the United States from other countries. It was a great idea, and we thank you for it, J.K.! Here's the first installment in the series.

Sofia Pineda

Sacred Heart in Oberlin is a diverse parish with members who have roots across the globe. Whether recent emigrants, first-generation Americans, or those who came to the United States as children and are now adults, our community is enriched by the gifts they bring. One of those in our congregation who came as a young woman is Sofia Pineda. Sofia now resides in Oberlin, as do her son Baron, daughter-in-law Gina, and three grandchildren, Antonio, Pablo, and Lucia. Baron and Gina are both on the faculty at Oberlin College.

Sofia's story begins in Nicaragua, Central America. Her family owned an import/export business that shipped goods into and out of Nicaragua, so she had an awareness of the world beyond her home in Managua. At the age of nineteen, Sofia was told of opportunities available in San Francisco, California. The possible adventure was intriguing. Although she had no firm prospects, Sofia set out for a land with streets paved with gold. She did have a girlfriend who picked her up at the airport and gave her a place to stay for a few days. However, Sofia had come to America with a plan for herself and she needed to get started. Our new emigrant was able to land a job. The typing classes which the nuns firmly insisted she excel at came in handy. Sofia knew, though, that for her plan to succeed, she had to face the challenge of learning English as a second language. The first few days of class she just listened until another student informed the instructor that Sofia had not said one word in a class of conversational English. The instructor spoke to our young adventurer and realized she did not know a single word of English and was not suited for this class. Undeterred, Sofia, always an excellent student (those nuns again), graduated with an English proficiency certificate in six months. Now back on track with her plan, she was invited to a party. Although not part of her original plan (as she had only been in America for six months), she met her future husband and, oh, well. Now a homemaker with a child on the way (perhaps it was a plan after all), it's the '60s, Sofia's husband is a student at UC-Berkeley, she is in San Francisco, and it's the Summer of Love

In today's world, with its uncertainty regarding borders, emigration, and refugees, Sofia's story is a true-to-life adventure of a young girl who came to America and built a foundation for generations of her descendants to achieve their own plans. Welcome, Sofia. Your adventure to America enriches us all.

Thank you.

Brian Barbuto

The individuals in the photo left to right are as follows:

Gina, daughter-in-law
Lucia, granddaughter
Pablo, grandson
Baron, Son
Antonio, grandson
Sofia



**Sacred Heart Parish
410 West Lorain Street
Oberlin, OH 44074-1002**

My parish priest!

Who is my parish priest? A son to a lonely mother, a big brother to a teenager, a father to the fatherless boy, an uncle to the boy whose father is never home, a grandfather to the little girl who never had one, a friend to the girl whose fiancé is killed in [war].

Someone to pour out your troubles to, someone to make you laugh when things seem darkest, someone whose shoulder you can cry on, someone to dry your tears, someone to set you straight. “All things to all men.” Thank you, God, for my parish priest.

The boy they never had to the childless couple, the son she wished she had to the mother of the convict, the saint to the sinner. Someone to confess your sins to, someone to say, “Your sins are forgiven you,” someone to share Holy Mass and Communion with.

The comforter, the aid to the poor and homeless, the one person you can turn to when the world turns away. “All things to all men” – that’s you, my parish priest.

M. O’Brien

St. Paul, Minnesota

[Submitted by Gerald Borer]