May 28, 2017 | The Ascension of the Lord

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Volunteer Coordinator
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Welcome Desk
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Mass Times
Saturday - 4:30 pm
Sunday - 8:45 & 10:30 am (ASL)
Tuesday, Thursday & Friday - 7:30 am
Wednesday - 9:30 am
Dear Friends:

I mentioned here last week that so much of the good work of Christian compassion goes on behind the scenes, in homes, among friends, and in parishes. One of the humbling things that I witness every week is the number of our parishioners who go out to visit the homebound and hospitalized members of our community who can’t get to church. They do it without any recognition; it’s just in their nature to be kind. Just before I arrived here as your pastor (now almost five years ago!) the decision was made to discontinue with a staff pastoral care minister because we didn’t have the financial resources to keep such a person. We still don’t. So volunteers just stepped up on their own. They still do. With amazing generosity and grace. This is what the gospel is all about.

I want to highlight here, though, one specific activity that has been going on at St. Pascal’s School for the past few years that most folks would probably not know about. I mentioned it at the Friends and Family celebration last month, but I’d like everyone to hear about it. It’s called The Sheridan Story. I was made aware of it by my sister (the same one who cares for Yolee, about whom I wrote here last week). She volunteers at Risen Christ School in Minneapolis, which is an overwhelmingly low-income Catholic school serving an almost completely Hispanic community. That school had partnered with The Sheridan Story almost since its beginning in 2010, and she thought St. Pascal’s might benefit from knowing about it too. She was right. So about three years ago I and she and Mary McGrath from our school office went over to see and hear about it all at their warehouse in southeast Minneapolis.

The Sheridan Story takes its name from Sheridan (public) School in Minneapolis, which also serves a largely low-income student body. The faculty at the school had begun to notice that some of the students were stealing or hoarding food on Fridays at lunch because they knew that there wasn’t going to be enough food at home to eat over the weekend. Something had to be done. Through an amazing partnership with many local benefactors and volunteers, this new non-profit corporation was born, and its growth has been phenomenal. The concept is simple. Volunteers pack food at the warehouse, which is then delivered to participating schools. Every Friday a package of food is discretely slipped in to the locker or back pack of students whose families sign up for the program while those students are at lunch. It is nonperishable, nutritious food for the weekend. The Sheridan Story serves one school that first year, then three, then five, then twenty nine. Today it serves ninety six schools, of which St. Pascal’s has been one for the past few years. But the most amazing thing to me is this: I wasn’t sure whether there would be much of a demand for this wonderful program at our school at the time I first learned about it. Today about three dozen families of our own St. Pascal’s School students receive the benefit of this program every week. If you ever happen to be in the staff/visitors’ lounge in our building, next to the offices, take a look in the corner of the room. There are boxes upon boxes of Sheridan Story packaged food that are there to be distributed to our kids. What an amazing ministry...too amazing not to be known among our parishioners. The cost for this is very low because of subsidies from their partners. We dedicated ten percent of the monies raised at Friends and Family to support this program. What could be more basic gospel charity than putting food into the mouths of children who otherwise might not receive it?

It surprised me at the time to realize that the need was that great, but it is. And we are partnering to respond in an excellent way.

One more thing. As many of you know our St. Pascal’s Day celebration with the Archbishop was a marvelous event. As I escorted the Archbishop out at the end of the morning he told me that “you have wonderful kids in this school.” I couldn’t agree more.

Fr. Mike Byron
FAITH FORMATION NEWS

Living Faith Books
Living Faith devotional booklets for July-September are now available for $1.25 each. They can be picked up in the parish office or on the ushers’ stand outside of the worship space.

Vacation Bible School 2017
Maker Fun Factory: Created by God, Built for a Purpose
Date: June 19-23
Time: 9:00 AM – 12 Noon
Place: St. Pascal Baylon Church
Cost: Only $32/child or $80/family for the whole week.

Are you looking for a place for your children this summer where they not only have fun, but also learn how they have been created by God for a purpose? Then come join us at this year’s VBS. Activities include SoundWave Sing and Play, Bible Discovery, Imagination Station, Game Makers, and more! Children ages 4 (by September 1, 2017) to grade 5 are welcome—bring your friends! Grades 6 and up, as well as adults—come join the fun as leaders! Registration forms are available in the kiosks and on the parish website.

Interested in helping with VBS? Need more information? Contact Kim Roering at 774.1585 or km.roering@stpascals.org.

Summer Stretch 2017
For: Youth entering grades 6-9 (Fall 2017) (grades 10-12 can serve as peer leaders)
Dates: July 31, August 1, 2 and 3
Cost: $50 for participants
$30 for peer leaders
Includes T-shirt, entrance to recreational activities, and ValleyFair.
Limited scholarships available.
Registration Deadline: Friday, June 16; limit of 24 participants and 6 peer leaders.

Registration packets with details are available in kiosks and online at www.stpascals.org. For more information, contact Kim Roering in the parish office.

Friday, June 2 from 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM in the Founders Room
Registration deadline: Thursday, June 1
The days before the Feast of Pentecost on June 4 are a good time for us to consider the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Our shared belief is that the Spirit, Gift from Christ, animates our faith—but what does that mean and what difference does it really make in our daily lives? We will reflect on the gift awareness of the “unpredictable and excessive grace” of the Holy Spirit to us. $45 includes lunch. To register or for more information, contact Jackie Witter at jackiewtr44@gmail.com or 612.751.2776.
Heart Questions

“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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20

Adult: Jesus promises to be with us always. How do you experience his presence most?

Child: What good news about Jesus could you share with someone?

Stewardship of Treasure

Financial Gifts – Week of May 21, 2017

For fiscal year July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

For the Week:  

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<thead>
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<th>Actual Received</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Variance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday Stewardship</td>
<td>$6,757</td>
<td>$810,320</td>
<td>$799,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mortgage Campaign</td>
<td>$1,637</td>
<td>$297,711</td>
<td>$258,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (Incl Holy Day)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Parking Lot Replacement</td>
<td>$34,000 (Goal)</td>
<td>$30,990 (total received thus far)</td>
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Year to Date:  

(July 1 – June 30)

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Budget</th>
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<td>Mortgage Campaign</td>
<td>$297,711</td>
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Please note: Automatic (electronic) contributions are made on the 1st and 15th of each month and will be recorded with the following Sunday’s collection. Each week our budget requires $17,000 in Sunday stewardship collections and $5,500 in Mortgage (capital campaign) contributions.

Thank you for your generous support!

The Week Ahead

Visit us at www.stpascals.org for more information on upcoming events.

Sunday, May 28—THE ASCENSION
After Masses  New Member Registration: BH

Monday, May 29—Memorial Day
Parish and school offices closed

Tuesday, May 30
9:00am  8th Gr Retreat: BH
7:00pm  SJCC Event: BH

Wed May 31
9:30am  School Mass—All are welcome!
5:30pm  Men’s Club Softball: CF

Thursday, June 1
9:30am  Nia: OC
5:30pm  8th Grade Mass & Graduation: CH, BH
7:00pm  SJCC Meeting: FR

Friday, June 2
8:00am  Reflect & Renew Day: FR
5:30pm  Wedding Rehearsal

Saturday, June 3
2:30pm  Schneider/Riesdorf Wedding

Sunday, June 4—PENTECOST SUNDAY
1:30pm  Piano Recital: FR

Employment Opportunity at Grace Lutheran Church
Office Associate (Limited Part-Time, 16 hours weekly)
1730 Old Hudson Road, Saint Paul

Our Office Associate performs the record keeping, reporting, communicating, scheduling, data entry and receptionist functions for Grace Lutheran Church, its pastor and lay staff. The ideal candidate will be a high school graduate with strong written and oral communication skills. Social, organizational, clerical, word processing, Internet and computer skills are a must. A minimum of two years’ knowledge and experience with general office procedures and common office equipment preferred. Knowledge and experience with use of the church’s Shepherd Staff software, Microsoft Word, Publisher and Excel preferred. Experience with church records a plus. Good listening skills and ability to maintain confidentiality. For a full job description and more information, please contact Pastor Karen Williams at 774.9617.

Adult Self-Care for Those Who Grieve

Wednesday, June 28 from 10:30 AM – 12 noon
Woodwinds Hospital Gazebo—1925 Woodwinds Drive, Woodbury

When we are grieving, creative self care is an essential part of nurturing our mind, body and spirit. You are invited to learn about and experience various self-care techniques to help cope with the stress of grieving. There will be a variety of self-care options to support your grief journey, such as: Hand massage | Meditation | Journaling | Mandalas | Aromatherapy | Planting | Worry stones | Nature walk | Craft

To register, please contact HealthEast Hospice Grief Support Services at 232.3543 or griefsupportservices@healtheast.org before June 23. There is no cost, but space is limited.
The Ascension of the Lord

Today's Readings: Acts 1:1–11; Psalm 47:2–3, 6–7, 8–9; Ephesians 1:17–23; Matthew 28:16–20. The last directive Jesus gives his disciples, as he gathers with them atop a mountain, is to go out to the whole world, to bring others into the faithful fold, and to remember that he is always with them. That message is for us, too. We have a responsibility to spread the Good News. In *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis states that we can bring the Good News to friends and strangers in the workplace, in the public square, or on a journey. This preaching, he says, is respectful and gentle and begins with personal dialogue.

The challenge is always to break out of the secure inner circle of family or parish or small organization and go out beyond, often into unknown territory. So this Easter season, consider how you practice your faith beyond the family home. Discover a new place for your interests within the parish, where you might have to learn something different about your faith. Perhaps you might want to sponsor someone who is interested in becoming Catholic. Going beyond our comfort zone is a challenge, but we are not alone. St. Paul tells us to put all things—all faith, uncertainty, and hope—beneath Christ’s feet, for he is the head of the Church. And Jesus himself, as he is to ascend into heaven, assures us that he is with us always, until the end of the age. We need to always be confident of that.

Witnesses to the Ends of the Earth

God of all ages, you have been our guardian and guide from the creation of the world to the present age. Empower us with your Spirit, and bless us with understanding as we seek to do your will. May we be your witnesses in the world, in our homes, and to neighbors and strangers. May your Holy Spirit be with us today and every day, our constant guide and our hope in times of trouble, as we grow in faithfulness and generosity, as we seek to be witnesses beyond boundaries. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

May 28, 2017
I Am with You Always

**THIS WEEK AT HOME**

**Monday, May 29**  
**The Holy Spirit**  
In the First Reading, Paul is confronted with the statement that some disciples have never even heard of the Holy Spirit. As odd as that may sound, we often do not understand or teach about the Holy Spirit, whose power and presence were promised to us by Jesus. The unifying power of the Holy Spirit is singular. The next time you participate in the Eucharist, notice the references to the Holy Spirit, who makes all one. *Today’s Readings: Acts 19:1–8; Psalm 68:2–3ab, 4–5acd, 6–7ab; John 16:29–33.*

**Tuesday, May 30**  
**The Hour Has Come**  
Both Paul, in the First Reading, and Jesus, in the Gospel, are beginning to say goodbye. How do we prepare to say goodbye to family and friends? The struggle is one of loss and deep love. Knowing that someone will be enjoying the Kingdom of God is at odds with knowing that we can no longer share with them the Kingdom insights here. *Today’s Readings: Acts 20:17–27; Psalm 68:10–11, 20–21; John 17:1–11a.*

**Wednesday, May 31**  
**Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary**  
The beautiful feast of two pregnant cousins visiting one another is a celebration of family support through prayer and particular insight. Elizabeth, much older, and Mary, much younger, find in one another a way to express the holiness of each other’s pregnancy, and to accept whatever God has in mind for them and their offspring. We might want to think of how we can be supportive to soon-to-be mothers. *Today’s Readings: Zephaniah 3:14–18a; Isaiah 12:2–3, 4bcd, 5–6; Luke 1:39–56.*

**Thursday, June 1**  
**Truth and Belief**  
How do we know what the truth is? Today’s reading from the Acts of the Apostles begins with a dispute over St. Paul and the truth that he presented. How do we determine the truth—or truths—of our faith? The first response should be one of prayer, with Jesus’ actions as a model for a prayerful life. Not only does Jesus give us an example of always relying on prayer to mark his life, his final prayers are an appeal to unity among believers. To determine the truth, we must be united in our belief and trust in God. *Today’s Readings: Acts 22:30; 23:6–11; Psalm 16:1–2a, 5, 7–8, 9–10, 11; John 17:20–26.*

**Friday, June 2**  
**Sts. Marcellinus and Peter, Martyrs**  
Marcellinus and Peter, two martyrs of the persecutions of the early fourth century, were so respected that they continue to be mentioned in Eucharistic Prayer I. Marcellinus was a priest, and Peter an exorcist. Their martyrdom in the year 304 under the Emperor Diocletian prompted a profound reaction, and their burial sites were eventually the foundation for basilicas built in their names, a testament to so many other martyrs of the early Church. *Today’s Readings: Acts 25:13b–21; Psalm 103:1–2, 11–12, 19–20ab; John 21:15–19.*

**Saturday, June 3**  
**St. Charles Lwanga and Companions**  
Charles Lwanga and twenty-one other Ugandan Christians were martyred between 1885 and 1887 by the brutal dictator Mwangwa. Some of the martyrs had been baptized, but many were still catechumens. All were marched to their death, tortured along the way, and forced to witness each other’s brutal deaths. Their witness is a reminder that, in every age, people struggle to keep the faith alive. *Today’s Readings: Acts 28:16–20, 30–31; Psalm 11:4, 5 and 7; John 21:20–25.*
Nonpublic schools can and should play vital role in quest for educational justice

We need to move past "public" vs. "private" labels to help students of color and those in poverty get chances at schools with proven records.

By Anne Weyandt
MAY 18, 2017

Minnesota faces no greater challenge than eliminating achievement and opportunity gaps for students of color and children living in poverty. Too many children in our state do not receive the education they deserve. I witness the harmful consequences in my East Side St. Paul community.

As a member of an academic community whose intellectual tradition insists on social justice and collective action, I accept responsibility to use the gifts of intellect and imagination to resolve the most complex issues confronting us. As a lifelong educator, I am convinced we cannot rely on the valiant efforts of our colleagues in public education alone to confront these pervasive challenges.

It is time for our nonpublic and private schools to more explicitly pursue educational justice — honoring the dignity of each child and promoting creativity, achievement and inclusion in our classrooms. To do this, we need to eliminate barriers to enrollment in nonpublic and private schools that have strong records of achievement for children affected by poverty and exclusionary racial practices.

There can be no question that there is more than enough work for all of us, work that demands our best thinking and courageous effort, work that requires us to move past simple categorization as "public" or "private" educators or schools.

When we waste precious time defending these labels, the crisis of educational injustice in our communities deepens and our children suffer.

As an example of this commitment, I offer our work at St. Pascal Baylon School on St. Paul’s East Side, where we express this deep commitment to social justice by honoring the dignity of each student, in solidarity with the community, and through tenacious elimination of financial barriers to enrollment.
As a matter of justice, no family who seeks to enroll a child in our school should be excluded by inability to pay. Legislative approval of the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit, included in the joint House-Senate omnibus tax bill, would significantly improve our school’s ability to serve low- and middle-income students, in a manner comparable to similar programs in 17 other states, including Iowa, South Dakota, Arizona and Florida.

I wish to be clear that I believe elimination of financial barriers is an essential element of our mission as a nonpublic school. Like our state’s public schools, our job is to eliminate economic injustice and expand access to educational opportunities that reflect a clear commitment to individual dignity and solidarity in every classroom, with each teacher, and in every measurement of student achievement and success.

This work is profoundly deeper, and much more significant, than the element of choice alone. For when we are clear that the vision for nonpublic and private education in our state embraces elimination of injustice and decades of racial, economic and educational inequality, these schools unquestionably possess a powerful, shared interest with their public school counterparts.

With creative, courageous and collective vision, we together alter unjust and inequitable systems and structures, establishing new relationships that promote the common good. There is no question this is an acceptable reason to support creative legislative proposals that eliminate financial barriers to enrollment in excellent schools for our neediest families.

Anne Weyandt is vice chair of the school board at St. Pascal Baylon, St. Paul. She is dean of the College for Adults and associate professor of education at St. Catherine University and president emerita of Anoka Technical College. The opinions expressed here are her own.

Unfortunately, we learned late on Sunday that the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit will not be included in the final version of the Omnibus Tax Bill that is being assembled by legislative leadership, the House and Senate Tax Chairs, and Governor Dayton’s administration.

We are extremely disappointed that we were not able to enact this important initiative this session.

With your support, we advanced this important school choice provision further than ever before. Opportunity Scholarships were included in the tax bills passed by both the House and Senate and were also included in the joint Omnibus Tax Bill that was passed by the legislature - and vetoed by Governor Dayton - this past week.

While 17 states have similar Opportunity Scholarship programs, those initiatives were not passed overnight. Achieving success for Minnesota’s students will require a long-term effort to continue raising awareness of the need to expand educational freedom in our state. MISF, Opportunity for All Kids (OAK) and our partner organizations are committed to staying engaged to ensure that future generations of Minnesota students have the ability to access the school that is best for them. We will keep working to remove the financial barriers that prevent too many Minnesota students from achieving excellence.

We will build on the success we had in advancing Opportunity Scholarships further than ever before and will seek to help Minnesota students moving forward. Thank you for bringing your voice to this vitally important endeavor for KIDS.

Sincerely,

Chas Anderson, Executive Director  
Opportunity for All Kids

Tim Benz, President  
Minnesota Independent School Forum