

After the Heart of Jesus ...

*“Now we beseech you, Lord, in our weakness,
to grant us these helpers that we need
to exercise the priesthood that comes from the Apostles. ...*

*...
May they be faithful stewards of your mysteries,
So that your people may be renewed in the waters of rebirth
and nourished from your altar;
So that sinners may be reconciled and the sick raised up.
May they be joined with us, Lord, in imploring your mercy
for the people entrusted to their care and for all the world.”*

- Prayer of Ordination to Priesthood



The first Saturday in June is the traditional day for priesthood ordination in the Diocese of Joliet. At this year's ordination I was privileged to serve as a vesting priest for one of the two newly ordained priests, Father Mark Rosenbaum. The other newly ordained priest is Father Ryan Larson. I've known both of our new priests for a number of years, from the time Mark was a letter carrier for the Post Office and Ryan was a runner in college at Iowa State. Journeying with the men who desired to give their lives for a purpose far beyond their own was one of the real privileges of my previous ministry as diocesan vocation director.

Most all of the younger priests you know who have served at St. Walter are celebrating anniversaries at this time of year. My eighteenth anniversary is this Sunday. Fathers Peter Jarosz and Doug Hauber, who have been associate pastors here, are two of my classmates. There were nine priests ordained for Joliet on June 3, 1989. We were the last big class the Diocese had. In the early part of June Father Mario Quejadas will be joining us as our new parochial vicar (associate pastor). Father Mario, too, is celebrating an anniversary of his ordination on June 3. He was ordained in 2000. Because of a shortage of priests, several parishes lost their associates this year, meaning where there once were two priests there will now be one. We are fortunate to still have two priests to serve full-time at St. Walter.

I heard many positive and wonderful comments about Father Burke Master's visit to the parish to speak on vocations a couple of weeks ago. The reasons for the shortage of priests we are experiencing are many, but it is not because the Lord has stopped calling. The Lord continues to call young men to the priesthood, but many cultural and societal factors have influenced the way the call is heard and responded to. One of my favorite prayers for vocations is simply, "Lord, take from our families that which and those who are needed for your purposes." That kind of generous spirit can lead to a bountiful harvest for vocations.

On this ordination weekend, please pray for our diocese's newest priests Father Mark and Father Ryan, and for your priests, Father Mario, Father Phil and me. *May we be faithful stewards of God's mysteries, so that people may be renewed in the waters of rebirth, and nourished from Christ's altar, and so that sinners may be reconciled and the sick raised up.*

Next weekend we will recognize and thank Caroline Karpinski for her 22 years of faithful ministry as liturgist and director of pastoral care here at St. Walter Church. Please join us in celebrating her ministry after the 7:30 and 9:00 AM Masses on Sunday, June 10, in the Narthex.

We are in need of four new parish pastoral council members to replace those who have served over a dozen years each. Three members will serve a three-year term, and one will be appointed to a two-year term. Please see the announcement in this weekend's bulletin for details. Please encourage fellow parishioner you feel would be great parish council members to apply. Interest forms should be submitted by June 11.

For many of us June means the beginning of summer and a different pace to life. Hopefully we will all have a chance to relax more, enjoy the outdoors, and have time to be renewed in body and spirit. Some summer opportunities to enhance our parish life include the home Masses in our neighborhoods, the Bible Study and Afterwards our seminarian Jason Stone and I will be doing with our high school teens, the Theology on Tap for young adults in the twenties and thirties, and our famous Bible Camp for the children. Please check the bulletins for further information on all of these events and activities.

Summertime also means vacation time. God never takes a vacation from loving and caring for us, and we should never take a vacation from our praise and worship of God. Make time for God on your vacations. And please remember your parish throughout the summer. We depend on year round giving from all of our parishioners. This may be the time to sign up for giving through e-contributions. It's an easy way to make sure contributions are made on a regular basis and an excellent way to keep track of all gifts made to the parish. To sign up for e-contributions see the parish website. Thank you for your generous support of the cause of Christ through St. Walter Parish!

May our life in the Holy Spirit help us to live ...

After the Heart of Jesus!

Father John