

# The Catholic Community of St. John Neumann

www.ccsjn.org

September 5, 2015

Volume 33, Number 36



## *A Christian Community of the Catholic Tradition*

Diocese of Metuchen  
Most Rev. Paul G. Bootkoski, Bishop

www.diometuchen.org

Trustees:  
Mary Connolly  
Lyle Garcia

### *Our Parish*

Rev. Abraham Orapankal, Ph.D. ....  
..... Pastor  
Rev. J William Mickiewicz.....  
..... Founding Pastor Emeritus  
Earl Roberts ..... Deacon

#### *Mailing Address:*

PO Box 455  
Califon, NJ 07830

#### *Office Center:*

398 County Route 513  
Califon, NJ  
908-832-2513  
908-832-7618 fax  
www.ccsjn.org

#### *Worshipping at:*

398 County Road 513  
(Church Center)

Saturday Vigil Mass .....5:30 p.m.  
Sunday .....8:00 a.m.  
Sunday .....10:30 a.m.  
First Friday Holy Hour .....7:00 p.m.

#### *Worshipping at:*

\*Check the bulletin for any changes\*  
390 County Road 513  
(Neumann Residence)

#### *Weekday Masses:*

Tuesday .....7:00 a.m.  
Friday .....7:00 a.m.

#### *Reconciliation:*

Saturday..... 5:00-5:25 p.m.  
Or anytime by appointment.

### **Mission Statement**

***Catholic Community of St. John Neumann***

***FOUNDED*** on the teachings of Jesus Christ,  
***NOURISHED*** by the hospitality of the Califon Christian  
Communities,

***FORMED*** with a commitment to Social Ministry, and  
***STRENGTHENED*** by the Holy Spirit

*The Catholic Community of St. John Neumann is  
a jubilant people on a continuing spiritual  
journey of hope:*

***TO CELEBRATE*** and ***DEEPEN*** our faith  
***TO SHARE*** our unique gifts, talents and treasures  
***TO CHERISH*** all life  
***TO LIVE*** in openness, acceptance and love.

### **Annual Parish Goal**

***Growing in the Love of the Lord  
Through the Faith Formation of Each Member,  
We Will Give Witness To and  
Welcome All Segments of Our Larger Community***

# This Week at Saint John's

## Mass Intentions

### Tuesday, September 8

7:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

### Friday, September 11

7:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

### Saturday, September 12

5:30 p.m. Anna Turley, req.

Mary and Pete Cangelosi

### Sunday, September 13

8:00 a.m. Alice St. Amour, req.

Marybeth & Bill Harrison

10:30 a.m. Rodolphe G. di Maio, req.

The Gemma Family



## Mass Schedule—September 12/13

### Saturday

5:30 p.m.

Celebrant ..... Rev. Abraham Orapankal  
 Reader ..... Linda Caprio  
 Altar Server ..... Upwood Family  
 Ministers of the Eucharist ..... Donna Lance  
 ..... Claire Drzewiecki, 1 Needed

### Sunday

8:00 a.m.

Celebrant ..... Rev. Abraham Orapankal  
 Reader ..... Jim Murray  
 Altar Server ..... France Kennedy  
 Ministers of the Eucharist ..... Sharon Janks  
 ..... Barbara Gates, Cyndy Behrens

### Sunday

10:30 a.m.

Celebrant ..... Rev. Abraham Orapankal  
 Reader ..... Gary Porto  
 Altar Server ..... Bush Family  
 Music Eucharistic Minister ..... Bob Martalus  
 Ministers of the Eucharist ..... Barbara Martalus, Anthony DeStefano  
 ..... Mark Brisson, Gloria Cucchiara, Ana Giametta

## Parish Calendar

### Sunday, September 6 - Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time / Yellow Brick Road Collection

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
 10:30 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
 10:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word (Narthex)  
 6:00 p.m. Confirmation Retreat Planning Mtg (Drexel Rm)

### Monday, September 7 - Labor Day

OFFICE CLOSED

### Tuesday, Sept. 8 - The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)  
 7:00 p.m. Budget Meeting (Drexel Room)

### Wednesday, September 9 - Saint Peter Claver, Priest

6:00 p.m. Yoga (Church Center Loft)  
 7:00 p.m. Private Meeting (Seton Room)

### Thursday, September 10 - Weekday

7:00 p.m. Music/Bells (Church Center)

### Friday, September 11 - Weekday

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)  
 4:00 p.m. Confirmation Retreat (Fairview Lake)  
 5:00 p.m. Cleaning (Church Center)

### Saturday, Sept. 12 - The Most Holy Name of Mary, BVM

5:30 p.m. Mass (Church Center)  
 6:30 p.m. Confirmation Retreat Return

### Sunday, September 13 - Peter's Pence Collection / Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
 9:00 a.m. K-6 Catechesis (Church & Office Center)  
 10:30 a.m. Mass - Confirmandi Return Mass/Celebrate Youth  
 2:00 p.m. Picnic  
 6:00 p.m. Jr. High Catechesis (Church Center)



### BANNS OF MARRIAGE

II. Damian DeStefano & Caitlin Martha Olsen  
 II. Michael Brian Foley & Maya Mariam Joseph



### Remembered at Mass

We stand together in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. The following will be remembered in the Eucharistic Prayer: **Edwin Bianco, Mary Nanna, Elizabeth Shack, Amelia Hemmer, Sharyn Milko Leeper** and **John Ledoux**.

**Deceased:** **Edwin Bianco**, father of Jennifer Evanko, **Elizabeth Shack**, friend of Anne Germino, **Mary Nanna**, mother of Frank Nanna, **Amelia Hemmer**, sister of Lou Eacovalle, **Sharyn Milko Leeper**, sister of Marlene Milko and **John Ledoux**, friend of the Connolly's. May they find peace and comfort in the embrace of the Lord and may their families find strength in the Lord & comfort & support from family & friends.

**FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK...**



Dear Friends,

Since Labor Day first became a federal holiday in 1894, the first Monday of September has been set apart to celebrate and value in American society the role of our workers and their work by providing, ironically and fittingly, a day off to rest and enjoy the fruits of one's labor. But It is also a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the deeper meaning of our work, which the language of faith provides. The Catholic Church proclaims the dignity, meaning and redemptive value of all human work. In 1981 Pope John Paul II wrote an Encyclical letter entitled "On Human Work" (*Laborem Exercens*) which beautifully presented this Christian vision of the dignity and meaning of human work, based on the biblical teachings.

In the industrial age, men and women were often reduced to mere instruments in a society that emphasized productivity over the dignity of the human person, the worker. The technological age promised more time for leisure and freedom but sadly has failed to deliver. Therefore a return to the biblical understanding of the dignity of human labor is needed. Look at Jesus. The Pope wrote that "Jesus was a man of work and that work enabled him to develop his humanity". He emphasized that "the work of Nazareth constituted for Jesus a way to dedicate himself to the 'affairs of the Father,'" witnessing that "the work of the Creator is prolonged through work and that therefore "...according to God's providential plan, men and women, by working, realizes their own humanity and that of others."

Work was forever transformed by Christ the worker! The Son of God worked. Even as a child he learned from Joseph, the carpenter, and worked with His hands. Certainly he sweated, got dirty and even experienced tiredness, hunger and thirst, but He was in a relationship with His Heavenly Father and his work was joined to the Father's work. That is the same relationship we have with His Father. Thus, for the Christian, work can become a participation in the continuing redemptive mission of Jesus. Jesus viewed his entire life and mission as work. He was always doing the "work" of the One who sent Him (John 9:3-4). We are invited by grace to do the same.

The early Christians knew this deeper meaning of human work. Even their early worship became known as "liturgy" which literally meant the "work" of the Church. The real world was not a place to be avoided--it was their workshop! Hence in the midst of resting and celebrating this Labor Day weekend, it will be a worthy exercise to take a few minutes of reflection on the deeper meaning of one's labor, and how one's faith shapes our understanding of the value of our jobs. "How is my job creating good in the little world I find myself in? In my family? In my work place? In my friendship circle? In my own heart?"

Happy labor Day!  
Your brother in Christ,  
Fr. Abraham Orapankal

**OUR JIM WEBER PLAYED FOR THE POPE!**

Our Organist, **James Weber**, traveled to Italy in July to perform with the Lakeland Chorale in several locations, including the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore (Florence), the Papal Archbasilica of San Giovanni in Laterano (Rome) and at St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City in the presence of His Holiness Pope Francis. The Lakeland Chorale is an ensemble consisting of students and alumni of Lakeland Regional High School in Wanaque, N.J.. This prize-winning, audition-only ensemble of young men and women under the direction of Mr. Weber has extensively toured the United States, Canada and Europe and is widely considered "one of America's foremost choral groups," maintaining a tradition of excellence not found in most public schools in this country.



**Like us on Facebook! Find us as "St. John Neumann RC Church, Califon NJ" or follow the link from the home page of our website at [www.ccsjn.org](http://www.ccsjn.org)**



**PARISH PICNIC**

**Sunday, Sept. 13th  
2:00 p.m. to dusk**

Please join us for our Annual Picnic. Great day of fun for the whole family.

Bring hamburgers or hot dogs and rolls, enough for your family & guests, and a side dish or dessert to share.

Enjoy good food, good fun, good conversation. There will be outdoor inflatables, kid's games, water balloon toss, and volleyball. There will also be a fun family potato harvesting contest (all vegetables go to Elijah's Promise) and a self-guided walk through the labyrinth and much more! All activities take place behind the church!

Fr. Abraham assures us that we will have a photo-op with Pope Francis on the picnic day!

The Duck Race starts at 2:00 p.m.! Be prepared to get wet if you want to join the fun and catch the ducks.

**WEEKLY COLLECTION**

**For August 30, 2015**

76 Donors Weekly ..... \$4,865.00

**For August 31, 2014**

85 Weekly Donors ..... \$3,929.00

***Parish Contact Information***

**Church Center (weekend use). 908-832-6343**

**Office Center .....908-832-2513**

Fax..... 908-832-7618

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France Kennedy ..... Pastoral Associate

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Kerri Caldaro..... Financial Administrator

Email..... [kcaldaro@ccsjn.org](mailto:kcaldaro@ccsjn.org)

Wayne Infusino..... Maintenance

**Religious Education .....908-832-2162**

Renee Ciszewski .Director of Religious Education

Email..... [renee@ccsjn.org](mailto:renee@ccsjn.org)

Jo Ann Jarvis ..... Office of Catechesis

Email..... [jjarvis@ccsjn.org](mailto:jjarvis@ccsjn.org)

Social Ministry ..... [socialministry@ccsjn.org](mailto:socialministry@ccsjn.org)

Anne Germino and Greg Wilson

Bulletin ..... [bulletin@ccsjn.org](mailto:bulletin@ccsjn.org)

Youth Ministry ..... [sjnygroup@gmail.com](mailto:sjnygroup@gmail.com)

# Christian Formation - Catechesis

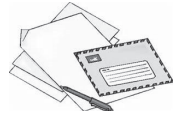


## CLASS MASSES

Once again, this year we would like to invite our religious education students in grades 3 through 8 to participate in a Class Mass. Each grade will have the opportunity to take part in the Mass as a class community. The students will arrive early on the day of their scheduled Class Mass. Fr. Abraham and/or Renee Ciszewski will lead an interactive and informative session prior to Mass, teaching the children about the Mass in terms that they can understand. These Masses will take place over the course of the school year during our regularly scheduled Mass times.

We encourage family and friends to attend Mass. The children will be happy to have you join them in prayer.

**The first Class Mass will be for the 8th grade on Saturday, September 19th, during the 5:30 p.m. Mass.**



## CONFIRMATION PRAYER SPONSOR LETTERS

### *Return Letters by September 8*

Thank you to all parishioners who signed up to be prayer sponsors for this year's Confirmandi. Please remember to pray for your candidate and write a letter of support that will be given to the candidate during their Fairview Lake Retreat. Please drop off your letter in the basket by the Confirmation Prayer station or at the Office Center by September 8. Thank you!

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES BEGIN 9/13



**Sunday morning** (K-6) religious education classes begin September 13th at 9:00 a.m. Classes will be held in the Office Center and the Church Center. Drop off will be at the office building for the morning classes. Please follow the arrows in the parking lot for this purpose. Please do not drop off at the church. Be patient as the students are dropped off and careful as you pass the church entrance as people are exiting from church. All should follow the arrows in the parking lot coming and going. Children staying for 10:30 Mass will be walked over to the church at 10:15 a.m. to meet up with their families. All others will be picked up in front of the office where they were dropped off. Again, in leaving the parking lot, please be careful of those coming to Mass. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Junior High** will also begin on Sept. 13, 6:00 p.m. in the Church Center. The session will begin with a parent meeting for all 7th and 8th grade parents.

The **Monthly Session** will begin on Monday, September 21st, at 6:00 p.m. in the Church Center.

# Social Ministry

## BACK TO SCHOOL GIVING TREE

"Thank you to everyone who donated to the Giving Tree this year, every donation whether large or small was greatly appreciated. This year we collected \$585 in gift cards, 6,185 sheets of loose-leaf paper, 59 notebooks, 61 folders, 21 packs of pencils, 23 packs of pens, 67 glue sticks, and much, much more. We look forward to continuing this success year after year."



## SHOP RITE, A&P & KINGS CARDS

Thanks to **10 families** who purchased Shop Rite, Kings and A&P gift cards the last week, totaling **\$1,600.00**. The stores gave us **\$80.00** Cards are available after Mass or at the office weekdays.



## NOTES FROM THE GARDEN

Local food banks and soup kitchens have been flooded with this season's cucumbers. Have too many cucumbers? Make pickles! Last week we made 12 quarts of Bread and Butter pickles. Two quarts were enjoyed by the folks at SHIP soup kitchen with their noon meal. This week another 10 quarts were put by. There will be samples in the garden today. Come on a tour after Mass and "taste and see" God's abundance. Brussel Sprouts were planted last week and second plantings of peas and beets are in. Potato Harvest will take place at the Parish Picnic on September 13. Whoever digs the biggest potato wins a prize! The potato harvest will be donated to local soup kitchens. A Garden Expansion that will add a Community Garden to our current space is coming to St. John's this fall! See the exciting plans on display in the narthex.

## THE FUTURE OF A&P CARDS?

The news about A&P filing for bankruptcy should make us plan wisely about our use of the A&P cards we have been selling here at the Church. With the present uncertainty about A&P continuing beyond the end of this year, let us all make sure that we won't be stuck with unusable cards. Hence we will not be buying fresh cards once our present stock is over.



## **ATTENTION ALL ST. JOHN GOLFERS (MEN, WOMEN, & TEENAGERS)**

**Saturday, September 19, 8:00am to 2:00pm  
Minebrook Golf Club, Hackettstown**



Reserve the date on your calendar (which is less than a month away) for the upcoming St. John's annual Golf Outing.

We had a great turnout last year. **Hugh Mckenna (one of our parishioners) of Johnson Dodge-Chrysler-Jeep** has once again offered to the opportunity to win a brand new red Jeep Renegade for the Hole-in-One prize, which is parked at the entrance to our driveway.

To Register: Please sign in the on the registration sheet in the church lobby, or e-mail Bob Martalus at [bob.martalus@gmail.com](mailto:bob.martalus@gmail.com) or call him at 908-439-3732.

Registration Fee: \$125 per golfer Sponsor a Hole Fee: \$125 (includes a sign)

## **TRICKY TRAY- DATE CHANGE - SAVE THE DATE**

**Save the Date - Friday, October 16th**

The Tricky Tray is scheduled for Friday, October 16th. Mark your calendars and bring family, friends and neighbors.

We are asking for donations for our event. Some suggestions include; Toys, Games, DVD's, New/Unused Household Items, re-gift your unused Christmas or Birthday Gifts, Gift Cards from Target, Walmart, Shop-Rite or other Local Establishments. Leave donations in the Seton Room and fill out a donation form for a tax deduction.

Thank you, Kathy Kelly Pagliuca



## **SMILE WITH YOUR FAMILY**



**In a Nonsmoking Area:** "If we see smoke, we will assume you are on fire and take appropriate action."

**At an Optometrist's Office:** "If you don't see what you're looking for, you've come to the right place."

**In a Podiatrist's office:** "Time wounds all heels."

**At a Car Dealership:** "The best way to get back on your feet-miss a car payment."

**Outside a Muffler Shop:** "No appointment necessary. We hear you coming."

**In the front yard of a Funeral Home:** "Drive carefully. We'll wait.."

## **POPE TO PARENTS: TEACH YOUR KIDS TO PRAY**

During his weekly General Audience in a sunny St. Peter's Square last week, the Pope called on parents to teach their little ones how to pray, to make the sign of the cross. Speaking off the cuff, Pope Francis stressed how sometimes he goes in the cities and makes a sad observation. "There are children who have not learned how to make the Sign of the Cross! But you mummies, daddies, teach the little ones to pray, to make the Sign of the Cross: this is a beautiful task of moms and dads!"

The Pope suggested that while many have the best of intentions, they still have difficulties finding time in their busy schedules to pray. Even if it's challenging, he stressed, we must do this. We need to spend time with the Lord, Francis stressed, saying parents need to set good examples and reminding faithful how they can turn to Christ. In our daily lives, the Pontiff said, we must make a concerted effort to do this.

"Do not forget, every day read a passage from the Gospel. Prayer springs from intimacy with the Word of God. Do we have this intimacy in our family? Do we have the Gospel in our home? Do we take some time to open it and read it together? Do we meditate on it and pray the rosary? Reading and pondering the Gospel in the family is like a good bread that nourishes the heart of everyone."



## **TAG SALE 2015**

We have already begun accepting items for the tag sale. Leave your donations under the tent.

Please remember **WE DO NOT ACCEPT** Clothing, Appliances, Air Conditioners, Old TVs, Stereos, Cribs, Computers, Monitors or Upholstered Furniture.

If you can help organize ahead of time or sell on sale days-please call Sandra Aaron 908-507-2378. If not...a prayer would help!!!

## **TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**September 6, 2015**

***"Did not God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him?" (JAMES 2:5)***

What is more important – being rich in faith or rich in possessions? Society teaches us that possessions are most important. God teaches a different lesson. When we are rich in faith we know that material things really do not matter and we are more willing to share what we have.

## **VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES**

### **Office Angels**

Wednesday, Sept. 9 C. Behrens

Wednesday, Sept. 16 M. D'Avella

### **Store Cards**

#### **Sept. 5 & 6**

5:30 p.m. E. McCabe

8:00 a.m. V. Hoffart

10:30 a.m. S. Pojedinec

#### **Sept. 12 & 13**

5:30 p.m. J. Eacovale

8:00 a.m. M. Kearns

10:30 a.m. D. Hunt

### **Church Center Plant Watering**

Week of 9/6 B. Lee

Week of 9/13 L. Livoti

### **Church Center Cleaning**

September 4 Team A

September 11 Team B

## **REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS**

Eugene Cifranic  
Jean Crickenberger  
Vicky Davids  
Tino DeSantis  
Ava DeTorre  
Sophia DeVita  
Anthony DeVito  
Neal Ercolano  
Paul Ferri  
Gordon Furlong  
Sophie Geist  
Fred Holub  
Colleen Jijack  
Diane Jackson  
Frank Kostecki  
Lou Livoti  
Jan McLeavey  
Michael McMahon  
Christine Meyer  
Evelyn Murray  
Fran Miceli  
Beau (Bernice) Mills  
Fr. John Negrotto  
Michael James Nonestied  
Mary Lou O'Brien  
Floyd Opdyke  
Peter Ostapzuk  
Linda Owens  
Nilsa Perez Parsons  
John Pfeufer  
Earl Roberts  
John Ryder  
Bob Simms  
Julie Suplee  
Bryan Travis  
Sherry Whitford  
Josh Wilkes  
Caden Zane  
Jill Zane  
Joey Zieba

## **MILITARY PERSONNEL**

If you have someone in the military that you would like us to remember in our prayers, call the office or drop the name into the collection basket. As military personnel leave the Service, please notify us so that we can remove them from the list. Please remember the following in your prayers:

Captain Baumann, Katherine, U.S. Army  
HM Bullis, Christopher, U.S. Navy  
Private, Linzer, Matthew, U.S. Army  
Seaman, Linzer, Stephanie, U.S. Navy  
SR O'Leary, Thomas, U.S. Navy  
Captain Royal, Benjamin P., USMC  
Ensign Simila, Nicole, U.S. Navy

## **YOUTH CORNER!**

### ***ALISON KUCHARSKI: "MY HAITI EXPERIENCE..WOW!!"***

*(Alison is our parishioner who is a senior at the University of Scranton, a Jesuit school, as an Exercise Science major, with a minor in psychology and nutrition.)*

When I say the word, "Haiti" what do you think of? Go ahead, marinate on it. The first words that used to come to my mind were "earthquake, devastation, and poverty." And then I went there. I received the amazing opportunity to journey on a service trip to Haiti with 11 other Scranton students of varying grades and 2 faculty members through our International Service Program in our Campus Ministry office. After months of meetings, preparation and prayer with my group, we felt ready to step on that plane. We left in the beginning of June, scared, excited and full of hope.

When our plane touched down that Wednesday, I immediately felt the heat and began to get anxious. When we stepped out of the plane, into the small terminal, I began to take in clips of a loud, unfamiliar, rhythmic language, faces I'd never seen, and the brutal, unceasing heat. I was overwhelmed and uncomfortable and questioning what I got myself into. So I did the only thing that would help me calm down...I began to pray, for guidance, a calm spirit and an open mind.

About an hour and a half after touching down, we arrived at the PID's compound, and were shown our living arrangements for the week. Concrete floors and walls, a tin roof, 2 rotating fans, and bunk beds, became our home. We were informed of a few basic rules of the compound: 1. No flushing toilet paper. 2. Showers must be less than 5 minutes long-and they were cold (a blessing in disguise in the heat)! 3. All lights and fans should be kept off during the day - as the compound ran on solar power and needed to be conserved.

It may sound as though we were in a glorified prison... Yet it was the complete opposite. Throughout the week, we worked from 9-3, with an hour break for a single spicy PB&J on hot dog roll for lunch. Our work consisted of helping to finish build a set of two bedroom homes for 2 local women and their families in a mountainside town called C'anaan. We carried, sifted, sweat, sanded, painted and sweat some more. The work was tough, but so rewarding, as we had met the women receiving these houses. On our breaks, we played with the local children. This was my favorite part. Kids of varying ages ran barefoot through dirt, rocks, garbage, with smiles on their faces and rags on their backs. I have never seen such pure and innocent happiness elsewhere in my life, as these kids ran about, using garbage as "toys". My favorite little girl, was Maryellen. Each day, we'd arrive at our worksite, she'd run as fast as her tiny legs could carry her to our bus, and she'd reach up to me, and beg in French creole, for me to scoop her up and twirl her around. I'd ask her, Kouman ou ye ti fi? Which means, how are you little girl? She'd grin and her eyes would light up, and giggling, (probably at my accent), answer "byen," or good. This tiny encounters made my day.

On Sunday, we went to Mass as a group...and that was when it all kind of hit me. I looked around me, at these people who lived a world away from me... these people who had next to nothing of material substance... these people who were seemingly SO different from me. However---They were praising the same God that I do. They were thanking him for their family, just like I do. --They, who have "so little", and yet, have so much to be thankful for. These were people of immense faith--they trusted in God to guide them after the earth shook and destroyed the world that they once knew. These people: worked, spoke, shared, smiled, prayed, and loved...just like me. They may live miles and miles away and have a different color skin than I, yet they are more similar to me, than I could've ever imagined or hoped. I've engrained in my memory the phrase: Tout moun se moun," which in creole means "We are all human beings."

I feel as though I'm still processing all that I saw...levels of immense poverty--enough that you feel physically ill, and so helpless...even months later. I'm still attempting to understand the full purpose and depth of this mission trip for me on a

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# Parish & Community News

Continued from page 6

personal level. What I do know is that, I will carry this experience with me forever, and I will never forget the family that I left behind in Haiti. I came into the trip not knowing how to handle it all, and how I could really make a difference in just 7 days. I've learned however that if you can't feed one hundred people, just feed one. I was afraid of so many things before this trip.. but I've come to realize that faith is bigger than prejudice, hate, poverty, and fear.

I'd like to leave you with a few last thoughts: The first: being that the word "earthquake" was said only once while I was in the beautiful country of Haiti. Once. It doesn't and shouldn't define the spirit of Haiti. ---Second: The most beautiful human beings are the ones who have known defeat, struggle, suffering and loss... and are still able to have an appreciation and understanding for all of life's journeys. And lastly, a quote by the always-appropriate Mother Theresa: "The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others."

I am eternally grateful for this incredible experience-for the friends that became family after this trip, and for the life lessons I have learned.

## **SUNDAY GOSPEL REFLECTION: *The Music of "Ephphatha"***

***Jesus put his finger into the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, "Ephphatha!" - that is, "Be opened!" Mark 7: 31-37***

A car bomb explodes on a commercial Baghdad street, killing ten people and injuring many more. Sadly, such destruction is not unusual in the Iraqi capital. But in the wake of this blast, something unusual did happen. As police and military secured the area, a man appeared wearing a black suit jacket, his long hair combed back. He unfolded a small chair and sat down. And then, amid the rubble and ash, he began to play his cello.

The musician is Karim Wasfi, the renowned conductor of the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra. Wasfi has been appearing at such sites around the city of Baghdad, playing an original composition titled "Baghdad Mourning Melancholy." A deadly attack on his own Baghdad neighborhood a few weeks ago prompted him to take his cello to the streets. "The other side chose to turn every element, every aspect of life in Iraq into [a] war zone. I chose to turn every corner of Iraq into a spot for civility, beauty and compassion."

Karim Wasfi's playing at the sites of such devastation attracts a wide-ranging and appreciative audience of soldiers, shop owners and residents of the destroyed neighborhoods. Many listen in tears; Wasfi's music inspires hope and perseverance and assures his fellow Iraqis that life, not death, is reality. "Unlike what people think, we have a choice of fighting back," the maestro explains. "We can't just surrender to the impending doom of uncertainty by not functioning. But I think it's an awakening for everybody to make a choice and to choose how they want to live, not how they want to die. "My message as an artist, as a conductor, also as a cellist: that when things are abnormal, we make things normal. We make things worth living for."

**Throughout the Gospel, Jesus calls us to remain open - *Ephphatha!* - to the possibilities for transformation through selfless love, for re-creation that is enabled by humble generosity, for restoration that can be brought about by perseverance and courage in the face of destruction. In times of grief, fear and despair, we can be "deaf" to the presence of God, isolating ourselves from God's compassion and hope in the midst of such pain - but Karim Wasfi, in the gift of his music, attempts to bring hope and possibility for life in the midst of death to his Iraqi country men and women. The spirit of *Ephphatha* is to recognize the possibilities for transforming the lives of the broken and isolated in the completeness and hope of God's living presence in our midst.**

## **RIGHT TO LIFE RAFFLE**

New Jersey Right to Life will be selling Raffle tickets the weekend of Sept. 26/27 after all the masses.

**Prizes are:**

**1st** - 2016 Volvo XC60 AWD SUV  
(value \$40,000)

**2nd** - \$1,000 Shop-Rite gift card

**3rd** - \$750.00 Shop-Rite gift card

**4th** - \$500.00 Shop-Rite gift card

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Tickets are \$10.00 each. Thank you and God Bless you.

## **SUMMER ENVELOPES**

We sincerely thank our parishioners who mail or deliver your weekly envelopes to the parish office while you are out-of-town on vacations this summer. As many of you understand, our parish expenses and obligations do not take a vacation when you do, so it is very helpful to be able to rely on your continued support even when you cannot personally attend Mass here.

## **AVAILABLE GIFT CARDS**

We have the following Gift Cards available in the Office. If you would like to purchase any of them, call the office or stop in during the week.

Amazon	4	\$ 25 each
Amazon	3	\$100 each
Dunkin Donuts	7	\$ 10 each
Dunkin Donuts	5	\$ 25 each
Home Depot	6	\$ 25 each
Home Depot	5	\$100 each
Panera	7	\$ 5 each
Panera	4	\$ 10 each
Regal Cinema	10	\$ 10 each
Star Bucks	8	\$ 10 each
Target	4	\$ 10 each
Target	4	\$ 25 each
Target	2	\$ 50 each
Walmart	9	\$ 25 each
Walmart	4	\$100 each

There are other gift cards available that can be ordered. The order forms are available in the Narthex. You can drop it in the collection basket, mail it or drop it off at the office.

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