



The Catholic Community of St. John Neumann

www.ccsjn.org

May 1, 2016

Volume 34, Number 18



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
..... 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:
390 County Road 513
(Neumann Residence)

Check the bulletin for any changes

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, May 3

7:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

Thursday, May 4 (Ascension)

7:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

7:00 p.m. Wendy & James Rush, req.
Karen and Edward Verso

Friday, May 5

7:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

Saturday, May 7

5:30 p.m. Ralph Mitchell, req.
Mike and Marcy Matlosz

Sunday, May 8

8:00 a.m. Genevieve Nowatkowski,
req. Jim & Roni Durham
10:30 a.m. Antonette Hilger, req.
Jarvis Family

Parish Calendar

Sun., May 1 – Sixth Sunday of Easter / YBR Collection

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)
9:00 a.m. K-6 Catechesis (Office & Church Centers)
9:00 a.m. Living Rosary (Labyrinth)
10:30 a.m. Mass (Church Center)
11:30 a.m. Blessing of Project Earth Garden (Garden)
11:45 a.m. Community Garden Sign Up (Garden)
6:00 p.m. Jr. High Catechesis (Church Center)

Monday, May 2 - Saint Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Tuesday, May 3 - Saints Phillip and James, Apostles

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)
7:30 p.m. R.C.I.A. (Upper Room)

Wednesday, May 4 - Easter Weekday

12:30 p.m. Staff Meeting (Drexel Room)
4:00 p.m. 1st Eucharist Retreat (Church Center)

Thursday, May 5 - The Ascension of the Lord - Obligation

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence)
7:00 p.m. Mass (Church Center)

Friday, May 6 - Easter Weekday

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)
5:00 p.m. Cleaning (Church Center)
7:00 p.m. First Friday Holy Hour (Church Center)

Saturday, May 7 - Easter Weekday

11:00 a.m. 1st Eucharist Celebration Mass (Church Center)
5:30 p.m. Mass (Church Center)

Sun., May 8 – Seventh Sunday of Easter / Mother's Day

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)

Mass Schedule—May 7/May 8

Saturday	5:30 p.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Reader	Anita Sawczuk
Altar Server	Uss Family
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Donna LanceLyle Garcia, Violetta Olesiak
Sunday	8:00 a.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Reader	Jim Murray
Altar Server	Mastro Family
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Sharon JanksBarbara Gates, Barbara Martalus
Sunday	10:30 a.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Reader	Gary Porto
Altar Server	Geerinck/Torczon Family
Music Eucharistic Minister	Kristin Gemma
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Jane Albert, Debbie KelemenSheena Carew, Mark Brisson, Cindy Carroll

First Friday
Holy Hour
May 6th - 7 p.m.
Church Center



Join us for an hour of Prayer
and Meditation before the
Blessed Sacrament.

Remembered at Mass



We stand together in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. The following will be remembered during the Holy Eucharistic: **Dan Crease, Walter Price, Phil Stout, Cynthia Briggs, and Barbara Coyne.**

Deceased: **Walter Price**, husband of Rita Price, **Phil Stout**, brother of Debbie Hunt, **Cynthia Briggs**, sister of Marion Dabrowski, and **Barbara Coyne**, aunt of Cindy Carroll. May they find peace and comfort in the embrace of the Lord and may their families find strength in the Lord and comfort and support from family and friends.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK....

Dear Friends,

The month of May brings a special feeling of joy and hope, symbolized by pretty flowers, increasing foliage on the bare trees and pleasant weather with some needed rains. No wonder, there were many secular events to celebrate this emergence from the dreary winter into the sunshine of summer. May Queen Crowning is still a popular event, especially in Europe during the May Day Celebrations. The crowned girl, decked with flowers, rides or walks at the front of the parade.

The Church honors Mary the mother of Jesus as the May Queen. In 1965, Pope Paul VI identified the Month of May as an opportune time to promote Marian devotions. There is no strict format in the way we can do this, but there are many suggestions and ideas that individuals, families and parishes can choose from. Marian prayers like Hail Mary and the mysteries of the Rosary are Christ-centered and biblical. Can we make sure that our children will know these basic prayers by heart? This is possible if only we recite them on a daily basis.

One of the practices that our Religious Education department's Renee Cisweski and Jo Ann Jarvis are promoting earnestly is "the Travelling Mary." Each family takes the beautiful Statue of Mary home and keeps her in a prominent place for a week. The family prays the rosary or reads the Bible in front of the statue. We do not worship Mary, but we use the statue as a tool to remind us of what Mary told the servants at the marriage feast of Cana: "Do whatever He tells you" (John 2:5)

But let us not forget that the first day of May begins with the feast of St. Joseph the Worker. When the Communist celebrations of the "May Day" focused only on the rights of workers, the Church wanted us to focus on work as a vocation of human beings. Thus it was Pope Pius XII who instituted this feast in 1955 to show the relationship of work and humans in the divine plan. Jesus himself was known as the "carpenter's son" reminding us the value and dignity of human labor from which even God's own Son was not exempt! Thus work is not a burden but a means to fulfillment and satisfaction even in the midst of drudgery and monotony! May all our work bear good fruit.

Your brother in Christ,
Fr. Abraham Orapankal

BEREAVEMENT GROUP UPDATE

The first six session Spring bereavement group, which met at St. John Neumann, concluded on April 6th. The participants were remarkable in their candor and support of one another as they mutually advanced through coping with their losses. Everyone who participated evaluated the program as "very helpful". Because of the positive feedback and the support it gave to individuals who experienced the death of a loved one or loss through divorce, another six session program will be offered this coming fall at St. John Neumann.

If you or anyone you know would benefit from the non-threatening support offered, please be on the watch for exact dates and times in coming issues of the church bulletin. If you wish to let the leader of the group, parishioner John Cole, know of interest or questions beforehand, you can send him an email at colejfp22@gmail.com. John is a helping professional with extensive expertise in supporting people through life transitions.

The Fall bereavement group will be open to individuals who may not be parishioners from St. John Neumann. Individuals of all faiths, experiencing loss are encouraged to inquire.



WELCOME NEW PARISHIONERS

St. John's welcomes Walter Laskowski and the Dalessandro Family to the parish. Walter was welcomed at the 10:30 Mass on April 24th but he often attends the Saturday 5:30 Mass. The Dalessandro's also were welcomed at the 10:30 Mass last weekend. Matt and Sara have two girls and a son, Lucy, Sonny and Cassidy. Check out their pictures on the Welcome board in the narthex and introduce yourself to them.

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 1, 2016

"The disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit." ACTS 13:52

Our limited human understanding cannot begin to understand the immense power of God. Instead of trusting in God, we think we can control every outcome. Do you want to make God laugh? Tell Him your plans. The next time worry, anxiety or fear creeps in, thank God for all He has given you and trust He has a better plan for you.

2016-FAB FIVE RAFFLE ITEMS



LG 50" LED Smart HDTV \$630 Value



Thermoelectric Wine Cooler & Cabinet \$600 Value



Dyson Cinetic Big Ball Animal Bagless Upright Vacuum \$600 Value



Apple iPad Mini 4 Wi-Fi \$500 Value



Sonos Play: Wireless Speaker \$200 Value

Parish Contact Information

Church Center (weekend use) 908-832-6343

Office Center908-832-2513

Fax..... 908-832-7618

Email..... sjn@ccsjn.org

Rev. Abraham Orapankal Pastor

Email..... abraham@ccsjn.org

Earl Roberts..... Deacon

Email..... earlr1@verizon.net

Sharon Janks..... Pastoral Administrator

Email..... sjanks@ccsjn.org

France Kennedy Pastoral Associate

Email..... fkennedy@ccsjn.org

Kerri Caldaro..... Financial Administrator

Email..... kcaldaro@ccsjn.org

Wayne Infusino..... Maintenance

Religious Education908-832-2162

Renee Ciszewski .Director of Religious Education

Email..... renee@ccsjn.org

Jo Ann Jarvis..... Office of Catechesis

Email..... jjarvis@ccsjn.org

Social Ministry socialministry@ccsjn.org

Anne Germino and Greg Wilson

Bulletin bulletin@ccsjn.org

Youth Ministry sjnygroup@gmail.com

Christian Formation - Catechesis

FIRST COMMUNION CLASS RETREAT



**Wednesday, May 4, 2016,
4:00 p.m., Church Center**

The First Communion Class Retreat is on Wednesday, May 4, 2016, at 4:00 p.m. in the Church Center. All children should bring their completed banners and their own choice of a snack (food/drink) with them. Parents (or at least one parent or caregiver who will be attending the First Communion Mass) need to arrive by 6:15 p.m. for the First Eucharist ceremony instruction led by Father Abraham. All families are welcome to witness the First Communicants' renewal of their baptismal vows at 6:00 p.m.

CPII DAY OF DISCERNMENT



**Sat., May 21, 2:30 p.m.,
Church Center**

CPII Day of Discernment will be held on Saturday, May 21, at 2:30 p.m. in the Church Center. All CPII candidates and their parents are expected to attend. CPII candidates for Confirmation will celebrate the Rite of Covenant at the 5:30 p.m. Mass following their Day of Discernment.

CPIII DAY OF REFLECTION



Sat., May 14, 2:30 p.m.

The CPIII Day of Reflection is on Saturday, May 14, at 2:30 p.m. in the Church Center. All 2016 Confirmation Candidates will be participating in this retreat on the gifts of the Holy Spirit and participating in the 5:30 p.m. Confirmandi Mass that follows. CPIII parents involved in facilitating this retreat need to email their final plans to Renee Ciszewski as soon as possible.

SPRING GIVING TREE THANK YOU



Many thanks to all our parishioners who so generously gave to the **Center for Great Expectations**, the **Samaritan Homeless Interim Program (SHIP)** and **Safe in Hunterdon**. All gifts will be delivered to these organizations in the next few weeks. Thanks for your support!



MAY, THE MONTH OF MARY

The month of May is the "month which the piety of the faithful has long dedicated to Mary, the Mother of God," and it is the occasion for a "moving tribute of faith and love which will soon be paid to the Queen of Heaven in every corner of the earth. For this is the month during which Christians, in their churches and their homes, offer the Virgin Mother more fervent and loving acts of homage and veneration; and it is the month in which a greater abundance of God's merciful gifts comes down to us from our Mother's throne." (Paul VI: Encyclical on the Month of May, no. 1).

In observance of the Marian month, we invite you to celebrate along with us:

- Living Rosary – May 1st, during Sunday morning catechesis at 9:15 a.m., on the church grounds. Parishioners are welcome to join the children in praying the Rosary.
- May Crowning – May 15th, at 10 a.m. There will be a procession, led by our 1st Communion Class, to crown the statue of the Blessed Mother in the church center. All are welcome to bring in flowers from their garden for this special celebration at 10 a.m. (before the 10:30 Mass).
- Mary Statue -- available for Home Visits to all parishioners! Please contact Religious Ed. to schedule your two-week visit. It is the perfect opportunity to pray the Rosary as a family in your home.

For more information, contact the Religious Ed. at Office 832-2162.



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

Saturday, May 7, 11:00 a.m., Church Center

On Saturday, May 7, 2016, at 11:00 a.m., we will culminate our journey that began in the fall learning about reconciliation and forgiveness, continuing through God's amazing sacrifice and love for us, and will end in the treasure of receiving Jesus in First Holy Communion for 12 of our young church family members. Please congratulate and pray for our First Communicants: William Consigli, Jordan Erz, Kyle Erz, Sophie Guzzino, Klaudia Kowalewski, Emilia Kuhn, Philip Mathew, Samuel Meekings, Summer Ona, Daphne Roskowski, Anthony Vassiliades and Michael Vassiliades.

All of this was made possible through the heartfelt commitment of the children's families bringing their children regularly to our gatherings and our devoted catechists. We are so blessed to have this program enthusiastically led by our wonderful Catechist Cathy Gagen assisted by two of our dedicated Catechists Susan Erz and Danielle Meekings, and Fr. Abraham and Jo Ann Jarvis. Please celebrate and share in our joy!

Social Ministry

GARDEN BLESSING

We will celebrate and bless the Gift of Good Land Community Garden at St. John's this weekend on Sunday, May 1 following the 10:30am Mass. Light refreshments will follow. Please join us!

COMMUNITY GARDEN RAISED BED SIGN-UPS

On Sunday, May 1 following the Blessing we will begin to assign the raised beds in the community garden. We have 27 raised beds to offer on a first come basis. We will also have a waiting list. If someone is unable to plant their bed it will go to the next person on the waiting list. There is no charge for these beds but each family or individual who takes a bed will be asked to complete 12 hours of service over the course of the summer in the Project Earth Garden where we grow food for soup kitchens, food banks and local families in need. Find Anne Germino after the Blessing to sign up and receive a packet of information.



AUCTION RAFFLES

St. John's Annual Auction is in the works! The Fabulous Fab 5 Prizes are on display in the Narthex and we have some great items! You can support the parish by asking your friends, family and neighbors if they might like to win one of these wonderful prizes and buy some chances! You will receive 2 books of tickets in the mail, they are on the way. Why wait? Books are available in the Narthex to pick up for your friends!

For those who have not participated before, we have **two raffles!** **The Fab 5** – with great prizes, and **the 50/50 for a cash prize of up to \$25000!** Stop by the narthex or office and take a chance to win!



SMILE WITH YOUR FAMILY



A man in an Armani suit, Ferragamo shoes, the latest Polarized sunglasses and a tightly knotted power tie emerges from his shiny silver BMW car, approaches a shepherd guarding his flock, and proposes a wager: "Will you give me one of your sheep, if I can tell you the exact number in this flock?" The shepherd accepts. "973," says the man. The shepherd, astonished at the accuracy, says, "I'm a man of my word; take the sheep you have won." The man picks a sheep and begins to walk away. "Wait," cries the shepherd, "Let me have a chance to get even. Will you return my animal if I tell what your job is?" "Sure," replies the man. "You are an economist for a government think tank," says the shepherd. "Amazing!" responds the man, "How did you deduce that?" "Well," says the shepherd, "you drove into my field uninvited. You asked me to pay you for information I already know, answered questions I haven't asked, and you know nothing about my business. Now put down my dog; it is not a sheep." 😊

AUTOMATED GIVING: A PARISHIONER'S EXPERIENCE!

My name is Mary Connolly. The reasons we chose the automated giving option when it was first offered come down to commitment, consistency, convenience, and conditioning. Actually conditioning has to do with air-conditioning. I was just trying to be clever with 4 "c" words. Fr. Bill pointed out during a homily one time that while we were all at the shore or in the Outer Banks for summer vacation, they were still running the air-conditioning for the folks back at St. John's. It sounds obvious now, but that really hit us and it certainly connects with consistency and commitment. When you see the weekly donations in the bulletin, they fluctuate and always go down over the summer. On a very practical level it makes sense to have our church, aka our community, be able to count on and plan with a consistent budget. That is more important than ever for our fiscal stability. We have been parishioners for over 20 years and with 4 children it wasn't always easy having one more financial obligation, especially during the college years, but we did our best to stay the course. With automated giving when I am not here physically, our financial commitment to all of you still is.

The process is very straight forward, that's where convenience comes in. You choose an amount to donate and it is taken out once per month, I believe on the 15th. You also have the option of donating to the Yellow Brick Road and any or all of the second collections throughout the year. You can change it at any time. It is not as much the amount you donate but the consistency and predictability that benefits our parish.

One comment we have heard is that others are going to think that we don't donate when the basket goes by. One recommended solution is to just throw in an empty envelope. I can't remember to bring them, hence again the convenience part of automated giving. Please prayerfully consider this option for your commitment to our Catholic community.



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

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY

Our next opportunity to help those in need right here in Hunterdon County will be from May 8-15, when we co-host for the Interfaith Hospitality Network with our neighboring parish, Spruce Run Lutheran. There are many ways to be of help including helping to set up, providing a meal, overnight assistance, or simply providing hospitality. There are always children who enjoy having other children to interact with, so it is a great family project as well. For more information on this, please go to www.ccsjn.org. Check the link under Social Ministry or contact Debbie Hunt at dhuntfam1@comcast.net. To see when & where help is needed, check the Sign Up Genius link at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e054eafad22a20-family>.

GROCERY GIFT CARS

We are now selling **Bishops Market, Weiss Market and Rite Aide** Gift Cards along with the Shop-Rite and Kings Cards. Bishops is located at 431 US-22 East in Whitehouse Station. We are getting a 10% discount. Available after Masses and at the office. Weis Market is located at 2045 Mansfield Village Square, State Route 57 in Hackettstown. They are open 24 hours.

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES

Office Angels

Wed., May 4 C. Behrens
Wed., May 11 J. Santoro

Store Cards

April 30 & May 1

5:30 p.m. B. Cestone
8:00 a.m. P. Nanna
10:30 a.m. S. Pojedinec

May 7 & May 8

5:30 p.m. E. McCabe
8:00 a.m. J. Klawunn
10:30 a.m. J. Varcadipane

Church Center Plant Watering

Week of 5/1 M. Cangelosi
Week of 5/8 B. Sobey

Church Center Cleaning

April 29 Team E
May 6 Team F

Altar Flowers

April 30 Anne Germino
May 8 Laura Mullen

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Virgilio Alves
Eugene Cifranic
Bill & Ginny Ciszewski
Jean Crickenberger
John D'Almeida
Vicky Davids
Barbara DelPiano
Tino DeSantis
Sophia DeVita
Neil Ercolano
Paul Ferri
Gordon Furlong
Sophie Geist
Fred Holub
Barbara Jiroushek
Lou Livoti
Frances Mattiello
Dick McCall
Jan McLeavey
Christine Meyer
Fred Moser
Evelyn Murray
Fran Miceli
Beau (Bernice) Mills
Michael James Nonestied
Mary Lou O'Brien
Floyd Opdyke
Linda Owens
Nilsa Perez Parsons
John Pfeufer
Larry Riley
Anne & Joe Sacco
Theodore Semper
Noah Skinner
Michael Slivka
Julie Suplee
Nicholas Troiano
Don Velli
Melody Shae Webster
William Weimer
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

WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

(An inspirational story sent by Kurt Erz)

One day a man saw an old lady, stranded on the side of the road, but even in the dim light of day, he could see she needed help. So he pulled up in front of her Mercedes and got out. His Pontiac was still sputtering when he approached her. Even with the smile on his face, she looked worried. No one had stopped to help for the last hour or so. Was he going to hurt her? He didn't look safe; he looked poor and hungry. He could see that she was frightened, standing out there in the cold. He knew how she felt. It was that chill which only fear can put in you. He said, 'I'm here to help you, ma'am. Why don't you wait in the car where it's warm? By the way, my name is Bryan Anderson.' Well, all she had was a flat tire, but for an old lady, that was bad enough. Bryan crawled under the car looking for a place to put the jack, skinning his knuckles a time or two. Soon he was able to change the tire. But he had to get dirty and his hands hurt. As he was tightening up the lug nuts, she rolled down the window and began to talk to him. She told him that she was from St. Louis and was only just passing through. She couldn't thank him enough for coming to her aid.

Bryan just smiled as he closed her trunk. The lady asked how much she owed him. Any amount would have been all right with her. She already imagined all the awful things that could have happened had he not stopped. Bryan never thought twice about being paid. This was not a job to him. This was helping someone in need, and God knows there were plenty, who had given him a hand in the past. He had lived his whole life that way, and it never occurred to him to act any other way. He told her that if she really wanted to pay him back, the next time she saw someone who needed help, she could give that person the assistance they needed, and Bryan added, 'And think of me.' He waited until she started her car and drove off. It had been a cold and depressing day, but he felt good as he headed for home, disappearing into the twilight.

A few miles down the road the lady saw a small cafe. She went in to grab a bite to eat, and take the chill off before she made the last leg of her trip home. It was a dingy looking restaurant. Outside were two old gas pumps. The whole scene was unfamiliar to her. The waitress came over and brought a clean towel to wipe her wet hair. She had a sweet smile, one that even being on her feet for the whole day couldn't erase. The lady noticed the waitress was nearly eight months pregnant, but she never let the strain and aches change her attitude. The old lady wondered how someone who had so little could be so giving to a stranger. Then she remembered Bryan... After the lady finished her meal, she paid with a hundred dollar bill. The waitress quickly went to get change for her hundred dollar bill, but the old lady had slipped right out the door. She was gone by the time the waitress came back. The waitress wondered where the lady could be. Then she noticed something written on the napkin.

There were tears in her eyes when she read what the lady wrote: 'You don't owe me anything. I have been there too. Somebody once helped me out, the way I'm helping you. If you really want to pay me back, here is what you do: Do not let this chain of love end with you.' Under the napkin were four more \$100. Well, there were tables to clear, sugar bowls to fill, and people to serve, but the waitress made it through another day. That night when she got home from work and climbed into bed, she was thinking about the money and what the lady had written. How could the lady have known how much she and her husband needed it? With the baby due next month, it was going to be hard... She knew how worried her husband was, and as he lay sleeping next to her, she gave him a soft kiss and whispered soft and low, 'Everything's going to be all right. I love you, Bryan Anderson.'

There is an old saying... 'What goes around comes around.' Today I send you this story, and I'm asking you to pass it on. Let this light shine. God works in mysterious ways and sometimes puts people in our lives for a reason!

SUNDAY REFLECTION: The Runners

Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our dwelling with him."
John 14: 23-29

The group began about 15 years ago: a bunch of middle-aged guys, set in their ways, comfortable maintaining only those friendships that were long-standing. Most of them didn't know each other very well. But their commitment to running together - Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6 a.m., later on weekends, through the cold winter darkness and under the hot summer sun - had morphed into something wonderfully permanent, a brotherhood that makes days bright and the thought of old age less daunting.

Their travels together have formed affections now deeply embedded. On runs, two or three may breakaway to resolve some tension, administer therapy or just squawk. Their conversations as a group are predictable: they untangle the world's political problems, renew college rivalries, and banter about their adventures as husbands and dads. ADHD, the tendency to exaggerate with comic predictability, braggadocio, hypochondria - one or more members may, on any day, manifest these conditions, but acceptance is unconditional.

Bodies grow fatigued. Hair thins. Shoulders hunch. The wear and tear of miles logged exacts a toll. But the Runners are still there for one another - even though one or two can no longer run. Together, they have celebrated their children's birthdays and many other milestones. Now they help one another adjust to the reality that those children are now adults making their way to college and beyond. The Runners' relationship remains intact on account of the ground they've covered; together, they form a rampart that both uplifts and protects them from the siege of time below.

The simple shared experience of running binds a group of guys together, creating a community of support and acceptance, of mutual respect and charity. For many of those same reasons, Jesus has brought us together as church: to create a community of compassion, of reconciliation, of charity for one another. What we share is our faith in the Risen Christ; his Spirit of humble and grateful service is what binds us together. In his peace, we are "connected" to one another; in his memory, we mirror the love that he lived and taught. As we anticipate the dawning of that Spirit at Pentecost, may we renew our Baptismal commitment to one another as the people of God: the community of disciples of the Gospel Jesus, who supports and lifts up one another in our own struggles to live that Gospel of humble and compassion-

WHAT ARE THE CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY?

The Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teachings of Jesus and give us a model of how we should treat others, as if they were Christ in disguise. They respond to the basic needs of humanity as we journey together through this life.

- Feed the Hungry (donate to a food pantry?)
- Give Drink to the Thirsty (donating bottled water?)
- Shelter the Homeless (Habitat for Humanity?)
- Visit the Sick (Hospital? Nursing home? Assisted Living?)
- Visit the Imprisoned (what about older shut-ins?)
- Bury the Dead (Can you help someone who is grieving?)
- Give Alms to the Poor (Pick a favorite charity)

WORLDWIDE YEAR OF MERCY CELEBRATION FOR THE SICK AND DISABLED

Mark your calendars for Sunday, June 12, 2016 at 12 noon for a special Year of Mercy Mass to honor the sick and disabled in our diocese. Following this Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Francis in Metuchen, all are invited to gather for fellowship and light refreshments.

PARENTING TUNE-UP

Gratitude can be an overused word these days, but that doesn't mean we should neglect it. Play a "Gratitude Game" with your child. See if each of you can list 10 things you're grateful for today. If something bad happens, see if you can find a silver lining. (by Susan Vogt)

MARRIAGE TUNE-UP

"Love one another." (John 13:35) You're married. Of course you love your spouse. But Jesus keeps repeating this command to love. Perhaps it is because love is never finished. Look for a new opportunity to show your love today. Surprise your beloved.

HEARTY WELCOME TO OUR NEW SHEPHERD

MOST REV. JAMES F. CHECCHIO - THE FIFTH BISHOP OF METUCHEN

The Episcopal Consecration and installation will be broadcast live

On Tuesday, May 3, 2016 at 2 pm. Check any of these:

NET TV – Diocese of Brooklyn
<http://netny.tv>

EWTN – Global Catholic Network
<http://www.ewtn.com>

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