

# Along the way

*"Were not our hearts burning within us as he opened the Scriptures for us along the way." — Luke 24:32*

A publication of **sabbath retreats**, the preaching ministry of Father Lou Papes

## Three Reasons to Celebrate

We celebrate birthdays, anniversaries and other significant events. Those are certainly not just "excuses" for partying; they are part of our life cycles that demand reflection, gratitude and celebration. So I recently came up with at least two or three good reasons to celebrate.

First I'll be turning eighty in February, definitely a milestone for most people! Further, this past May 28 marked the thirtieth anniversary of my ordination (and they said it wouldn't last!). Major celebrations among priests in Cleveland are usually at twenty five and forty years, but frankly counting on forty in my case might be a crap shoot! Finally, though some wouldn't think so, moving to a retirement community is in my mind a legitimate reason to celebrate! Who wouldn't want to be pampered with chef-prepared meals, housekeeping services, entertaining activities, and on-site medical attention?

Since I'll be in California visiting my twin Maryann on our actual birthday, February 27, we'll celebrate our day in Cleveland with family and friends when she visits for a family wedding in September. Our mother navigated the stormy waters of sibling rivalry by allowing a symbolic separation of our birthday by baking each our own choice of birthday cake. Ironically, we always made the same choice: Mom's Spectacular Pineapple Upside Down Cake!

If you're reading this, consider yourself invited to "**Three Reasons to Celebrate**" at The Renaissance, 26376 John Road, Olmsted Township, on Sunday, September 30. We'll begin with a Eucharistic Celebration at 11:00 a.m. in the "Commons" followed by a light buffet. Children welcome. **RSVP: 216-252-0440 x411.**

## Off with the Old....

My plan to move into a retirement community later this year or next. However, in order to do that, I had first to sell the place that had been home for the last twelve years. Since the housing market in Cleveland was ideal for selling early this year (and still is), my agent urged me to put the townhouse on the market this spring. We thought it would likely sell in time for me to move in the early fall.

Not quite! The house went on the market on Thursday, April 19. Two days later, Saturday, April 21, it sold to the first and only couple to see it and at the asking price! They wanted to move in —not in the fall—but June 14. So the downsizing began: six-plus rooms to three!

A daunting task, but I did have help. First, for total transparency, I did NOT bury a statue of St. Joseph in the front lawn. Instead I placed the whole matter of the sale and move into the prayerful hands of the Sisters of St. Joseph! Secondly, men from Blessed Trinity Church and colleagues from Tri-C added muscle for the move.

Harold and Viviana, the purchasers, were equally gracious. The only request they had was to ask that I return to bless their new home after they settled in. That eased the pain of the dismal profit of \$162.24 on the townhouse (pictured above) I had bought twelve years earlier. So much for real estate as a sure investment! **And so....**



*The "old" homestead in Cleveland.*

## ...On with the New: A Moving Experience

Having helped my parents through their transition from their apartment in Parma Heights to assisted living in my last year at Saint Mary Seminary taught me some critical lessons in that process. The most valuable, in my opinion, was advice I got at the time from the Office on Aging of the Diocese of Cleveland. The compassionate representative urged my older sister Marcy and me to impress on our parents that it was essential that they make a decision about a plan while they had control over their lives. Wise advice. We got Mom and Dad into Little Sisters of the Poor a mere four months before Dad's health began to fail. He died five weeks before my ordination in that loving and caring environment that also sustained my mother during that time until her death two years later.

Planning for transitions is never easy (*See TRANSITIONS on page 2*). So nearly two years ago, I decided that I would begin planning for my living situation post-eighty. (I cautioned my twin that eighty for us technically came at the end of this past May with the anniversary of our conception!) I visited nearly a dozen Cleveland area retirement communities searching for the best fit. Long story short: Eliza Jennings Renaissance in Olmsted Falls Township became my home on June 11. (*More on the Renaissance below.*)

As challenging as that move was, I have had a host of model seniors whose transitions into a more secure and protective living situation have inspired me. Since I retired nearly seven years ago, I have been blessed to minister to and work with amazing retired seniors who demonstrated not only a renewed zest for living, but also a genuine appreciation for the serenity aging can ideally afford. The example of the Sisters of the Congregation of St. Joseph, the Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland, the residents at St. Mary of the Woods in Avon, and especially all my friends (ordained, religious and lay) at Regina Health Center inspire and sustain me every day.



*These rather idyllic views are of the Eliza Jennings Renaissance in Olmsted Falls Township, my new home. (Yes, that is a fairway!)*

## The Renaissance

The Eliza Jennings legacy began in 1888 with the philanthropy of benefactress, Eliza Wallace Jennings, who intended to care for women of need. Eliza's legacy of philanthropy and concern for older adults lives on today, 130 years later, as a cornerstone of this organization and in its mission to serve older adults. Their network of communities includes: Eliza Jennings Health Campus at 10603 Detroit Avenue in Cleveland; the Olmsted Township Renaissance Retirement Campus at 26376 John Road, and Devon Oaks Assisted Living at 2345 Crocker Road in Westlake.

The Renaissance is situated on the back nine of a golf course and boasts 79 Villas, 96 Independent Living Apartments, 24 Assisted Living Apartments and a 96-bed Health Center. We have a great restaurant and bistro, a beautiful library, a fitness center, and my favorite bike path is a stone's throw away. If you're in the neighborhood (**26376 John Road, Olmsted Township, OH 44138**) stop by (**Apartment # 309**), but call first (**216-408-0708**) since I'm still staying busy with Sabbath Retreats and teaching so I may not be at home!



*A view from above!*

## In Memoriam: Friend and Confidant

Nearly forty-five years ago, I met my dearest friend Howard Erlichman at the annual convention of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in San Diego though he lived barely a mile away from me in an eastern suburb.

Though Jewish, he was one of the strongest supporters of my decision to enter the seminary some ten years later. Every few weeks of my five years in the seminary, he would take me out to dinner and a concert, play or movie.

After ordination we continued to go to dinner and the theatre together, Dutch treat of course. Some of my most relaxing vacations were on Cape Cod or the Stratford Shakespeare Festival with Howard.

More than a decade ago when I decided to create a website on which I would post my weekly homilies, I asked Howard to critique them before I uploaded them to the Internet. He did that every week for nearly four years until, as he said, I got the hang of it!

I considered it a genuine honor when his family and his partner Dale asked me to deliver Howard's eulogy on November 8, 2017.

The eulogy began with a quote from Elie Wiesel:

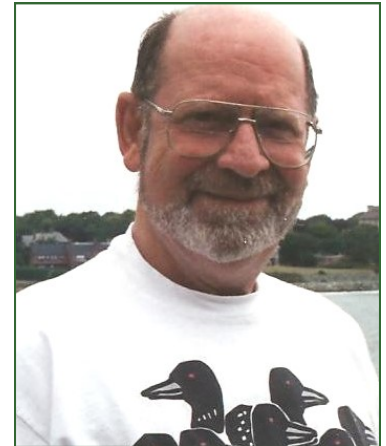
*"God made [us] because God loves stories." The stories of Howard defined him.*

*I often share this story of Howard: My best friend is Jewish. When we first met, we would argue incessantly over who was better at the guilt thing, Jews or Catholics. In order to salvage the friendship we came to an accommodation. We decided that the Jews created it and the Catholics perfected it!"*

The eulogy ended with a quotation from the Book of Proverbs 27:17:

*"Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another" summed up Howard's relationship with his family and especially his friends.*

*Our stories of Howard will continue to nurture us and keep him alive in our hearts. Those memories will be like a warm embrace from a friend who has been away for a while and returns now and again to delight each one of us with his presence.*



Howard Erlichman 1929-2017

### Someone in Need:

#### Another Way to Minister

Twelve year old Yasin Mohammed (pictured here in a 2016 photo) has completed Level 5 of school in his village near Hyderabad, India. In letters he writes to me, he proudly tells of his school work and his favorite pastimes which are watching cartoons, dancing, playing cricket, and reading.



I met Yasin through UNBOUND, formerly known as the Christian Foundation for Children and Aging (CFCA), headquartered in Kansas City. You may have heard their name on Cleveland's classical music station WCLV as a sponsor of their news broadcasts: [unbound.org](http://unbound.org).

There are a myriad of ways to expand our ministry as disciples: *Seek and you shall find*!"

### Women and the Word:

#### A Preaching Initiative

Over the years I have heard a number of gifted women preach, and their perspectives on life and the Word has always touched me in a unique and powerful way.

Then two years ago, while preparing the homily for the funeral of Carmelite Sister Mary Lavin, I saw the life of this remarkable Carmelite as nothing short of a homily in the deepest sense of the word.

Their unique feminine perspective on the preaching enterprise led me and a team of remarkable women of faith to develop "Women and the Word" as part of Sabbath Retreats.

Our mission statement simply asserted that the sole purpose of Women and the Word was: *to create a welcoming and supportive environment for the preaching of the Sunday Scriptures from a woman's perspective.*

Read all about "[Women and the Word](http://www.sabbathretreats.org)" on the Sabbath Retreats website, [www.sabbathretreats.org](http://www.sabbathretreats.org).

# Life's Transitions: Learning to live with change

Saturday, November 3 ~ 9:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m. Rivers Edge, 3430 Rocky River Dr., Cleveland

Whether it is a transition related to work, a relationship, a physical move, or another stage of life, the unique gifts of being human—memory and imagination—invite us to "think outside the box." In this interactive presentation, participants will be guided to reflect and discuss how, in the midst of change, the key elements of prayer, relationships, work/ministry, and leisure have shaped and will shape the call to wholeness.

*Presenter Fr. Lou Papes. Lunch is included. Cost is \$45.00. To register for the Jesuit Retreat House (Tuesday, August 7) call 440-884-9300. To register for Rivers Edge (Saturday, November 3) call 216-668-1111.*

**SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2018**

## ***Three Reasons to Celebrate***

*(See lead story on page 1)*

11:00 Eucharistic Liturgy followed by a light buffet  
at The Renaissance, 26376 John Rd., Olmsted Township

**RSVP: 216-252-0440 x411**

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