

December 30, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

At the end of December 1772, an Anglican priest in the poor parish of Olney worked by candlelight on his New Year's Day sermon. He would preach on the text of 1 Chronicles 17, verses 16 and 17. That passage was David's response to God after Nathan informed him that his descendants would be enthroned forever as kings of Israel. David, the once poor shepherd boy, the man who would have repented of adultery and murder, responded to the news by saying, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?"

That pastor was John Newton, and those words struck a deep chord in his heart.

In those last days of 1772, Newton found himself running out of empty pages in his journal, a bound book of 300 pages holding 16 years' worth of entries. As he came to finish that journal and start another, his mind was drawn to the pages of his past: the story of his life from his days as an unregenerate slave-trader to becoming a child of God.

Newton would have remembered when his rebellious spirit got him thrown off numerous ships, publicly flogged, and ousted from His Majesty's Navy. He would have remembered the shipwrecks and the mutinies—and then the transformation of his heart by the power of the Gospel. As Newton considered those days gone by, he would have asked as David did, "Who am I, O Lord . . . that you have brought me this far?"

As was his habit, Newton set to work composing a hymn to illustrate his New Year's Day sermon. In that hymn, he would tell his poor congregation of lace-makers and low-paid artisans about the dangers and snares he had faced. He would reflect on the amazing grace that had saved a wretch like him.

Those now-famous words of "Amazing Grace," first sung in the small parish of Olney on New Year's Day, 1773, lingered in obscurity for many years.

The words of "Amazing Grace" would surface again some 80 years later in a book that would change the course of our nation, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In it, the slave, Tom, at his lowest point, sings the words of "Amazing Grace." Two verses hardly sung today were sung by Tom: "And when this mortal life shall fail/And flesh and sense shall cease,/ I shall possess within the veil,/ A life of joy and peace." These words of the ultimate hope in God, even in the face of deep injustice, forever entwined the words of "Amazing Grace" with the plight of the slaves.

But it all began in that dark little study in the waning days of a year gone by, when one man took the time to reflect on God's goodness to him.

This New Year's Day it is my hope for us all that we would imitate Newton's expression of gratitude to God and his heart for the lost. I believe that we would do well also to set aside some time to reflect on what God has done in our lives—how He has freed us from the slavery of sin. And we would do well to consider how we, in this new year of 2013, can sing God's praise with our lips and with our lives. To you and all those you love, I pray that this New Year will be one of Grace and Blessings.

Monsignor Peter M. Joyce

December 23, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

Yesterday I received a Christmas card with a scene from Jesus' Last Supper showing Him washing the feet of His disciples. Imagine a Christmas card with no Mary or Joseph, no shepherds, no wise men, no angels, no star – not even Rudolph! Inside this card was the simple inscription; "Jesus was born to serve others."

This card brought me back to a promise I made at my ordination to priesthood over twenty years ago; to serve others as Jesus would have me serve. It has now been nineteen months since I arrived at our parish and how often I have heard it said, "Hey Father Pete, great parking lot!" However, I am confident that it is not for church renovations or parking lots that I was sent here. Rather, Jesus' desire is for me to know you, to love you, and to serve you. I have been reminded of this by you many times over this last year and a half.

Laura came to me saying that going back to church on Sunday was intimidating. She had been baptized Catholic and received her First Communion, but hadn't gone to church much since then. When she came to Mass one Sunday, she told me she intentionally stood in the back, behind all the families with squirming and squealing kids because she didn't remember when to sit, stand, or kneel, and she stood in silence as everyone else recited the creed. Patrick grew up in a traditional Catholic family, but he had a difficult time transitioning from the college environment into a parish. He told me he went "church shopping" to find a place where he felt at home. "I kept looking for a church, but after a while I thought, 'Why even bother going?' I didn't feel like I was getting anything out of it," He explained, "I never really left the Church. I just got lost."

Jeanne did leave the Church because she was hurt by how she felt the Church judged her; "After I was confirmed, I thought, good, now I don't have to do this anymore." She explained, "I became agnostic. I didn't think that God cared about me, and I didn't care about God." Later in life as Jeanne was going through a difficult divorce she decided to start attending a Protestant church, which she found more welcoming. "I thought the Catholic Church was like a country club-if you weren't a member, then you weren't invited." She met her current husband, Tom, about 10 years ago and they were married in a Protestant church. Tom had left the Catholic Church when he was a young man. "I thought I was never going to live up to the life the Church wanted me to," he told me.

In the past year, Laura, Patrick, Jeanne and Tom have all shared with me how they felt like something was missing in their lives and that they had a desire to return to the Church or to enhance their relationship with God. They also reminded me why I was here.

I am writing to you now because I believe that each of you has your own story and perhaps there is no better time than at Christmas for your story to be told. Christmas is our encounter with God who comes to us in the midst of our story; to hear us and to heal us, to embrace us and to guide us, to share in our lives so that we might share in His life.

On the day of my ordination I promised Jesus that I would try to hear you as He would hear you and so I ask you to call me, write me, email me, or let me come to you. On that same day, I also promised Jesus to serve you as He would serve you and so I ask you to make your needs known to me. I hope you consider this as an invitation from Jesus through me.

In the movie Rudy there is a wonderful scene where a wizened priest explains to Rudy that he cannot fulfill all Rudy's hopes and longings; he explains, "In the end I know that there are only two incontrovertible truths, there is a God and I'm not Him." I share with you these same sentiments. But, I also bring to you this Christmas my desire to be for you the pastor that God intends.

While I pray for you every day, please be assured that this Christmas my prayer for you is that your life be filled with the wonder of God's love for you.

Monsignor Peter M Joyce

December 9, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

Advent is when peace becomes something visible. All year, of course, we long for peace, but as Christians we spend these four weeks preparing for the coming of the Messiah, the Prince of Peace. We long not solely for peace on earth, the absence of conflict, but also, more deeply, for the peace of Christ, "peace that surpasses all understanding" (see Phil 4:7). When we celebrate Mass each Sunday, we pray for this peace and even exchange a sign of it before we approach the table of the Eucharist.

As deep and personal as our desire for peace is, it is our faith in the reality of Christ among us, which challenges us to broaden our understanding of peace and to open our hearts all the wider.

Our world is longing for peace in so many places! But we long not only for peace among those who fight. We also long for peace in the hearts. And so, beginning Wednesday, December 12, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered every Wednesday evening at the Church of the Resurrection from 5:30-6:30pm. Additionally, an Advent Penance Service will be celebrated on Thursday, December 13, at 7pm at the Church of the Resurrection. I believe there is no greater peace than that which is experienced in this Sacrament of God's great love for each and every one of us.

We long for peace for those struggling with poverty. Our Thrift Shop at Saint Casimir and our Community Food Pantry at the Church of the Resurrection will turn no families aside who seek food, support, and guidance. Our Saint Vincent DePaul Society ensures that all who seek assistance of whatever kind are treated with respect and dignity. The Knights of Columbus at Saint Casimir and at the Church of the Resurrection support not only these above endeavors, but, will undertake toy drives to ensure that the children entrusted to our care are not excluded from the joy of Christmas. In a similar manner, the Ladies Auxiliary at the Church of the Resurrection, the Parish Religious Education Program and our Thrift Shop sponsor 'Giving Trees' to aid those who might be without if it were not for your generosity. Each week, as I visit our young people in our Parish Religious Education Programs, I am so impressed by their initiatives to reach out to those who might be alone this Christmas, particularly to the member's of our community confined to nursing homes and other assisted living environments. None of this would be possible without your generosity. Thank you for supporting these initiatives that enable us all to be emissaries of Christ's Peace in our world and community.

We long for peace for the countless families dealing with the disastrous effects of the recent hurricane. We continue to seek to utilize the resources at hand to assist our sisters and brothers who come to us in need. I believe that as we look to the Holy Family displaced by hatred and jealousy we recognize our longing for peace for displaced people everywhere.

This Advent, as we open our hearts to Christ's Peace, I encourage you, most importantly, to pray that at our celebration of Christ's coming, that there be a longing for wars to end; for troops to return to their families. May we pray with a longing for justice, a longing that things set awry will be made right, and that in those who seek us out in need, may make the discovery of the Prince of Peace.

Monsignor Peter M. Joyce

December 2, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

Congratulations to our own Joanne McGuire for being named, 'Upper Township Citizen of the Year' by the Noon Rotary Club (Ocean City-Upper Township). The criteria for this reward is, 'service beyond self.' I can think of no one for whom this award is better suited.

On the weekend of November 10/11 you donated to Catholic Charities four thousand, four hundred and eleven dollars and seventy cents (\$4,411.70) to assist those recovering from the aftermath of Sandy. Often I speak to how grateful I am for your generosity. In reporting this to you, I convey not only my admiration for your generosity but also a sense of pride in our parish family. I am blessed to minister with you.

On November 15, 2012, I received a letter from Bishop Galante informing me that our parish boundaries will be reconfigured effective January 2, 2013. He wrote in this same letter:

Among the changes to a territorial parish which the diocesan bishop, motivated by this care of souls, can make would be any necessary reconfiguration of parish boundaries within the diocese (cf. can. 515 § 2).

The outcome of Bishop Galante's decision is that the Church of Saint Elizabeth in Goshen will become part of Our Lady of the Angel's Parish in Cape May Court House. Bishop Galante indicated that the reasons for his decision were primarily:

To reconfigure these parish boundaries in the manner described below would amount to a much needed simplification through the use of commonly-traveled roads and civil boundaries with which the people of these three parishes are familiar; and,

To reconfigure these parish boundaries in the manner described below would make the parish territories more in keeping with where the people of the overall area attend Mass and choose to have their spiritual needs met.

In my own desire to attend to the spiritual needs of our parish family, we will offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation, in addition to the regularly-scheduled times, another opportunity for the Sacrament on Wednesday evenings, 5:30-6:30pm in the Church of the Resurrection.

Also, beginning in the new year it is my hope to add an 11am, Sunday Morning Mass, to the Mass schedule at the Church of the Resurrection.

I pray that all the changes expressed here enhance the life of faith of our parish family. As we prepare to enter into this Advent Season, I pray that the light of Christ shine more brightly in your life and in the lives of those you love.

Monsignor Peter M. Joyce

November 25, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

For this Feast of Christ the King I offer you the following reflection:

Those who are called by an earthly king
And are bidden to meet with the great,
Who are asked to dine at the Royal Court
In earthly splendor and state,
They come from his presence with face alight,
With a proud and a lifted head,
They are eager to tell what they saw and heard
And repeat what the great one said.
But we who have supped with the King of kings
And have eaten the heavenly bread,
Are we eager to say what we saw and heard
And tell what the King hath said?
Are we proud that the King has called us 'Friends'
And bidden us seek His face?
Do we tell the world of
His matchless love?
Do we speak of His wondrous grace?

Monsignor Peter M. Joyce

November 18, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

Ten men silhouetted along the low ridge called to the leader of a small band below: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Bartholomew glanced up. Lepers, he thought. Ragged, pitiable lepers. They weren't allowed to get close enough to beg. Ragged, thin, rejected. Lepers. Even the word spoke an icy finality.

"Jesus, Master, Have mercy on us!"

Their pleading cut through Bartholomew's thoughts. Jesus was cupping his hands now, and calling across the low valley which lay between the road and the ridge where the lepers stood. His voice rang out sharp and compelling in the stillness of the morning.

"Go! Show yourselves to the priests," He said.

The lepers looked at each other. You only went to the priests if your leprosy was gone. Only the priests could issue a clean bill of health so you could return to your family.

But as they held up their decayed limbs, they were asking, "Why go unless we're healed?" They looked over to Jesus again, but he was talking with Peter and John, and they couldn't catch his eye.

Then Bartholomew heard a shout, a cry of exaltation, a loud eerie call that filled the valley and bounced off the hills: "I'm healed! I'm whole. My leprosy is gone! It's gone!"

Bartholomew looked around in time to catch a smile at the corners of Jesus' mouth. The healing had not occurred as the lepers stood looking and wondering. It had taken place as they had begun to obey Jesus' words. *On their way to the priests, they were healed.*

Suddenly a lone figure broke from the circle of the rejoicing ex-lepers. He bounded through the creek and raced towards Jesus and the others, rags fluttering behind him. He sped directly toward Jesus and landed on his knees before the Master, in a cloud of fine dust.

He spoke just three simple words, "Thank you, Master," in his Samarian accent. Then he just knelt there sobbing.

Jesus spoke now, not really to the leper, but beyond him somehow, as if to the whole world. "Were not all ten cleansed? They had received physical healing, indeed, but the man at Jesus' feet had received a healing of his whole person. As Jesus helped him up, He said, "Rise and go. Your faith has made you whole."

The newly-whole Samaritan embraced Jesus. Then they stood there for a moment looking at one another, smile meeting smile. The gift of healing sent him the message of God's love, but his own Thanksgiving had taken him home . . .

Monsignor Peter Joyce

November 11, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

Where Was God?

Maybe we treat the story of Noah and the Ark too much like a fairy tale: we line up the animals, imagining them all together—and brush right past the part about how this assembly occurs because everyone other than righteous Noah and his family had drowned. The story holds the promise of the rainbow, but it does not ward off the painful search for meaning every time our negotiations with the land and sea and air appear to have collapsed, as it has in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

Mystery does not sit well with us, nor random tragedy, nor helplessness in the face of a ruthless wind, so we may place our trust in better predictions and protocols and reinforced concrete and roofs designed to rebuff the gale.

And yet, as the initial shock of this disaster passes, we will also be confronted by the revival of a familiar question; “Why God Lets This Happen?” Some survivors will say God saved them—but if he chose to save the living, what does this say to us about those who are suffering, or worse yet, for those who have died? It is an occasion for atheists to remind believers of the flaws in the case for a benevolent God.

Yet I wonder why this debate erupts so violently every time the winds howl and land hurl water out of their way; for we know that God whispers as well as shouts, and mystery comes in all sizes. On any given day in between, an innocent child somewhere is struck by disease or starves in a drought-wracked desert. Do we only wonder why God lets people die in these large tragedies but are content not to ask if they die quietly, one at a time?

We might recognize it as one of God's great blessings that for most of us, whole days, weeks, and years can pass without an event that poses such a challenge to faith. But our faith reminds us that this is not a reason to dwell in complacency. Rather our faith demands an active commitment once the seas have calmed and the winds have died down and we are left with the rainbow and the invitation to wonder what it all really means.

For those who accept the invitation to give expression to our faith, a collection will be taken in every parish of our diocese at all Masses to assist those who struggle to recover from Hurricane Sandy. I thank you in advance for your goodness.

Monsignor Peter M. Joyce

October 28, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

The celebration of All Saints dates back to the year 313, when a common commemoration of Saints, especially the martyrs, many of whom had died in groups, appeared in various areas throughout the Church, all taking place in different regions of the Christian world and on different dates in the calendar year. This practice continued for over 400 years before the designation of November 1, as the Feast of All Saints became the official date for this celebration in Rome.

This week, the Parish of Saint Maximilian Kolbe will celebrate the Feast of All Saints on Wednesday evening at 7pm in Resurrection Church. Thursday, November 1, the Masses will be 7:30am in Saint Casimir Church and 8:30am and 7pm in Resurrection Church.

Along with the Feast of All Saints developed the Feast of All Souls. The Church has consistently encouraged the offering of prayers and Mass for the souls of the faithful departed.

In the early days of the Church, the names of the faithful departed were posted in Church so that the community would remember them in prayer. Eventually, November 2 was adopted as the Feast of All Souls for the whole Church.

I write to invite you and your family to a Mass for the Feast of the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed at 7pm on Friday, November 2, 2012 at the Church of the Resurrection, Marmora. The families in our faith community who have lost loved ones in the past year have been invited by our Parish to join with us at this Mass, as our faith consoles them.

I ask you to please support our brothers and sisters with the gift of your presence. We will pray not only for them but for all our faithful departed, as we bring them before our Lord this night. May the hope of the resurrection continue to be a source of strength and consolation for all of us.

Monsignor Peter M. Joyce

October 21, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

Eleven people were hanging on a rope under a helicopter . . .
10 men and 1 woman.

The rope was not strong enough to carry them all so they decided that one had to let go, otherwise they were all going to fall.

They weren't able to choose that person, until the woman gave a very touching speech.

She said that she would voluntarily let go of the rope, because, as a woman, she was used to giving up everything for her husband and kids or for men in general, and was used to always making sacrifices with little in return.

As soon as she finished her speech, all the men started clapping . . .

This Fall season our Knights of Columbus Women's Auxiliary at the Church of the Resurrection have sponsored or assisted at two wonderful events in the life of our parish family – the Saint Maximilian Kolbe production and our recent golf tournament.

Both these events brought us together to celebrate our parish and one another. Like so many other members of our parish, I take this occasion to applaud you.

Monsignor Peter M. Joyce

October 14, 2012 - View from the Rectory

'If then there is anyone sick, let them call the priest of the Church, and let the priest impose hands upon them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and if they be in sins, they shall be forgiven them' (Prayer from the Ritual of the Anointing of the Sick).

ANOINTING MASS

Sunday, October 21 at 2:30 pm – Church of the Resurrection

This Mass will satisfy your Sunday obligation.

Following Mass, please join us for fellowship and light refreshments.

All the members of our parish family are invited to share in a Celebration of Mass that includes the Sacrament of Anointing. The anointing of the sick is administered to bring spiritual and even physical strength during an illness, especially near the time of death.

The Sacrament's Effects

The anointing of the sick conveys several graces and imparts gifts of strengthening in the Holy Spirit against anxiety, discouragement, and temptation, and conveys peace and fortitude (CCC 1520). These graces flow from the atoning death of Jesus Christ, for "this was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, 'He took our infirmities and bore our diseases'" (Matt.8:17). "The special grace of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick has as its effects: the uniting of, the sick person to the passion of Christ, for his own good and that of the whole Church; the strengthening, peace, and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age; the forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of penance; the restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul; the preparation for passing over to eternal life" (Catechism of the Catholic Church # 1532).

The Sacrament's Recipients

All those who are suffering from:

**Infirmities of advanced age
Serious illness, sickness and/or disabilities
Upcoming surgeries and/or procedures**

are encouraged to share in the graces of this Sacrament of the Church.

Additionally, all parishioners who work in the field of health care, doctors, nurses, techs, home health aides, facility administrators, paramedics and ambulance and rescue crews are encouraged to attend in support our sick and infirm.

October 7, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

On the following page, I provide you with a summary fiscal accounting of the Parish of Saint Maximilian Kolbe.

I provide this from the time that our parish was established on December 14, 2011, until August 31 of this year. The reason this accounting ends on August 31 is to ensure a proper auditing of this report and the requirements set forth by the bulletin company to provide materials in advance for printing. Prospectively, it is my intention to provide you with a yearly accounting of the financial status of our parish.

While consulting with our parish finance council on a consistent basis about the fiscal status of our parish, I deem it an opportune time to share this information with you. I have sought in these sixteen months that I have been here to be a prudent steward of the resources entrusted to my care. I know that transparency in this regard is one of my foremost obligations to you. I hope this brief report reflects my intention to be faithful to this obligation. I further hope that the efforts made on behalf of our parish family since my arrival are consistent with my intent to be faithful to your generosity and fidelity.

I acknowledge that a report such as this may provide some enlightenment and, at the same time, it may generate some questions. For this reason, I invite anyone who wishes to clarify our parish financial status to come to a meeting on Thursday, October 11 at 7:00pm in the annex of the Church of the Resurrection. Our parish finance council representatives and I will be present to address any matters you raise in this regard.

I have attempted on many occasions to express how I have been humbled and encouraged by your generosity. I again thank you for all that you do to ensure that our parish family strives to make a return to the Lord for all His goodness to us and that our expressions of faith befit what we profess and believe.

Monsignor Peter Joyce

St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish
Income Statement
December 14, 2011 - August 31, 2012

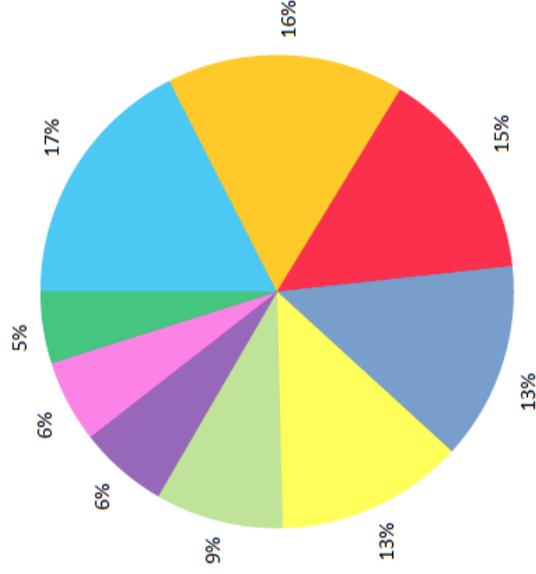
Dec 11-Aug 12

<u>REVENUE</u>	
Offerory Income	\$394,862
Other (Mass Stipend, Gifts, Activities, Interest)	183,417
Religious Education	17,364
Thrift Shop / Food Pantry	54,503
TOTAL REVENUE	650,146

<u>EXPENSES</u>	
Education (incl BMRS subsidy)	100,786
Administration / Office / Rectory	93,557
Payroll Taxes / Interest / Diocesan Assessment	83,899
Fundraising/Activities (Scrip, Bingo, Raffle)	77,870
Pastoral (Priests' Salaries & Benefits)	74,047
Liturgical / Music	50,451
Utilities	34,985
Custodial / Maintenance / Grounds	32,613
Thrift Shop / Food Pantry	28,172
TOTAL EXPENSES	576,380

GROSS OPERATING PROFIT	\$73,766
Capital Expenditures	\$333,506

<u>OUTSTANDING DEBT</u>	
BMRS Subsidy (\$78,885 annual total)	\$58,200
Loan - Diocese of Camden (BMRS)	1,229,281
Annual Principal Payment \$40,000	
Inherited Debt to Diocese	66,213



CAPITAL PROJECTS

- COTR: Altar, tile, landscaping and parking lot
- St. Casimir's: Kitchen hood exhaust system in lower church
- St. Elizabeth's: Landscaping and painting

September 30, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226), the patron saint of animals, was known for his joyful preaching of the Gospel, often accompanied by singing. He is also known to give praise to God for the beauty of God's creation. His love of nature and animals is reflected in stories of his compassion and care of all of God's creatures.

Among the stories told of St. Francis is the tale of his taming of a wolf that had been terrorizing the people of Gubbio, Italy. As the story goes, when the wolf charged Francis, he made a sign of the cross over the animal, which then stopped the charge. The wolf then calmly walked up to St. Francis and extended its paw. St. Francis is said to have spoken to the animal calling him "Brother Wolf" and promised that the people would feed the wolf from now on.

It is also said that when St. Francis could not find a human audience who would listen to his stories about Jesus, he spoke to the birds who then all came down out of the trees to gather around him as he preached.

On his feast day, October 4, it is traditional to bring pets to the church to be blessed by the priest.

And so, on October 6, at 9am, at the Church of the Resurrection, we will have a Blessing of Animals. We are inviting creatures of all types to be blessed in honor of the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi. All pets are welcome, but please don't forget your leash ***and your plastic bag!!***

Monsignor Peter M. Joyce

September 23, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

Not so long ago at Mass we heard Saint Peter exclaim, “Lord, to whom shall we go for we have come to believe that you have the words of everlasting life” (John 6:68). While I do not believe that the young people of our parish (and perhaps not just our young people?) are so conscious of this truth and its implications for our lives, I do believe the question demands our consideration. To whom shall we go when the things of this life and world fail us?

This past Sunday, parishes throughout the Catholic Church in the United States joined together in honoring those who serve in the Catechetical Ministry. Enlightened by God’s Word and the teaching of the Church, catechists share with our young men and women the truth and beliefs of our Catholic faith. At the 9:30 Mass, our parish catechists presented themselves before our Eucharistic community. I was awed and inspired by the number and the sincerity of those committed to ensuring that our young men and women know to whom they can go in their desire for a life of meaning, purpose, and joy.

I thank Mrs. Marie Moran, her dedicated staff, Mrs. Pat Sims and Mrs. Mary Wurtz, and our parish catechists and aides. May God’s fullest blessings be upon you and those you love.

Bill Brewer, Kathy Brewer, Agnes Bross, Rebecca Bross, Christine Burgos, Rosie Catanoso, Sue Catanoso, Tricia Ciliberto, Denise Cisternino, Grace Cruz, Dina Dull, Marybeth Dwyer, Margaret Farley, Rosie Farnan, Chris Ferrier, Bonnie Fiorentino, Marsha Gephart, Mary Pat Gleason, Maria Giordano, Cheryl Githens, Marybeth Grant, Lisa Hagan, Dawn Halbruner, Joe Hutter, Mary Anne Hutter, Michelle Inserra, Sherry Jurasinski, Dorothy Kalinowski, Michelle Karayianis, Leah Kornberg, Peg Kroeger, Pat Larkin, Kathy Latella, Carol Laufer, Shelly Laughlin, Dianne Leo, Pam Leypoldt, Jackie Lindsay, Amy May, Jean McGonigle, Beverly McPeak, Neil McPeak, Renee Miles, Julie Mullan, Barbara Muller, Bill Muller, Paula Neff, Cindy Oberg, Diane Peck, Ellen Pfeifle, Sue Ann Rash, Mary Jean Redmond, Antoinette Renteria, Nicole Renteria, Cathy Robbins, Joanne Roden, Michelle Sampson, Christine Selover, Christine Stremme, Helene Tolson and Joni Wriggins.

Lord God,
source of all wisdom and knowledge,
you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to live among us
and to proclaim his message of faith, hope, and love to all nations.
In your goodness
bless our brothers and sisters
who have offered themselves as catechists for your Church.
Strengthen them with your gifts,
that they may teach by word and by example
the truth that comes from you.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Monsignor Peter M. Joyce

September 16, 2012 – View From The Rectory

Saint Maximilian Kolbe Pastoral Council

On Tuesday evening, September 18, I ask you, parishioners of all ages from Saint Casimir, Saint Elizabeth and Resurrection Churches, to join me for a Parish Pastoral Council Information Night. Together we will welcome Sister Antoine Lawlor from the Pastoral Planning Office of the Diocese of Camden to enlighten us about the discernment process of selection and the responsibilities of serving on a Parish Pastoral Council in today's parish. I ask anyone interested to prayerfully consider sharing your gifts with this important ministry in our parish and to attend the information night September 18, 2012, 7pm in Resurrection Church annex.

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School of Liturgy  
Formation Sessions for  
Extraordinary Ministers of  
Holy Communion and for Lectors

A Eucharistic Minister is a trained lay minister with a deep understanding of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the bread and wine. As a Eucharistic Minister you will share the Body and Blood of Christ with a community of parishioners united by a common faith. You will assist the priest in distributing the Body and Blood of Christ during Mass and by taking Communion into the community to those not able to attend church.

The Lector/Reader is responsible for reading aloud, excerpts of the scripture during the liturgy. From the very beginning Christians have gathered together to hear The Word of God and from the very beginning there have been individuals entrusted with the task of reading The Word.

I invite anyone interested in assisting in these important lay ministries to contact the Parish Office, 609-390-0664, to reserve your place at a one day Diocesan Fall training session.

Saturday, October 27, 2012  
St. Katharine Drexel Parish  
6075 West Jersey Ave., Egg Harbor Twp., NJ 08234  
609-645-7313

8:30 – 9:00am Registration  
9:00AM – 3:00 pm Training Sessions

Saturday, November 3, 2012  
Our Lady of the Angels  
35 East Mechanic Street CMCH, NJ 08210  
609-465-5432

8:30-9:00am Registration  
9:00AM-3:00pm Training Sessions

Session fees will be paid by our Parish. You are asked to bring your lunch.

September 9, 2012 - The View from the Rectory Window

### **Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish Pastoral Council**

The current Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) for our Parish of Saint Maximilian Kolbe was appointed 8 months ago to serve as an interim council to assist us in discerning important decisions and events associated with our newly merged parish. The nine parishioner members, representing all three of our churches, have been a source of inestimable value as we sought to give life and expression to our new parish family. I thank them for their time, their dedication and their talented leadership in bringing us to this moment in the life of our parish family. We now are preparing to initiate a process to discern a new Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish Pastoral Council.

Parish Councils exist in three-fourths of the 18,000 Catholic parishes in the United States. Catholic pastors consult their councils in order to be better leaders. Priests ask their council members to investigate some aspect of the church, reflection it, and recommend their conclusions. In brief, the work of the PPC is pastoral planning. In a local parish setting, Council members help their pastor by studying, reflecting, and recommending their conclusions. After the pastor has accepted the recommendations of the council, he directs their implementation.

To implement the new PPC for Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish, I am looking for parishioners who desire to enter into the consultative nature of the PPC. I am asking you to assist me in realizing the meaning of our parish vision and assist us in translating that vision into present and future actions.

On Tuesday evening, September 18, I ask you, parishioners of all ages from Saint Casimir, Saint Elizabeth and Resurrection Churches, to join me for a Parish Pastoral Council Information Night. Together we will welcome Sister Antoine Lawlor from the Pastoral Planning Office of the Diocese of Camden to enlighten us about the discernment process of selection and the responsibilities of serving on a PPC in today's parish.

This meeting will be the first part of a process to help us discern, as the Parish Of Saint Maximilian Kolbe, how best to embody the Gospel imperative to put our faith into action. Again, the meeting for this discernment process for our new Parish Pastoral Council is Tuesday, September 18, 2012, 7pm in the Annex of Church of the Resurrection, Marmora.

I ask you to prayerfully consider sharing your gifts with this important ministry in our parish. I also take this occasion to thank you for all the blessings you have already shared.

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

September 2, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

So many people commented on the parish Feast Day celebration, some expressing their pleasure to be part of such a memorable event, others expressing regret that they missed out on this wonderful occasion.

I write to encourage you to not miss out on another opportunity to celebrate our faith, our parish story, and to experience a production that may never pass through our church again.

***Maximilian: Saint of Auschwitz***, the professional live production that tells the dramatic story of one man who stood up to the evil forces of Nazism, holds a powerfully relevant message for our culture, at a time when religious freedom and values are under attack. Starring well-known actor and producer Leonardo Defilippis, this one-man drama will be presented on Wednesday, September 5, 2012 at St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish - Church of the Resurrection in Marmora. The event is sponsored by the Knights of Columbus #9113 Women's Auxiliary.

The drama poignantly illustrates the life of Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Catholic priest whose courage in the face of attacks against his Catholic faith led to his imprisonment in the Auschwitz concentration camp during World War II. He was forced into slave labor, tortured and finally came forward to take the place of a married man, who was condemned to death by starvation.

Maximilian: Saint of Auschwitz is a riveting production, featuring the polished skills of a talented actor who switches characters and costumes with a speed and believability that amazes audiences.

Maximilian: Saint of Auschwitz is an inspiring dramatic portrayal not to be missed, filled with all the elements of professional theater yet striking in its simplicity. The drama includes technological artistry in the form of a majestic orchestral sound track, professional lighting, and a video backdrop that sets the story in a historical yet relevant context.

“We live in an exciting, challenging time, and we need heroes to show us the way we should live in an increasingly secular world,” said Defilippis. An audience member after a recent performance agreed. “The compelling images, combined with Leonardo’s impressive performance, made me realize this was a real man of our modern age who actually lived and died for another person. It gives me the courage to live my faith no matter what happens.”

The production runs ninety minutes, and is suitable for ages 10 and up. Admission is \$15 per adult and \$10 for ages 16 and under. For tickets and more information, contact the Parish of Saint Maximilian Kolbe at 609-390-0664 or Annamaria Fennekohl at 609-457-5921 or visit [www.saintmaxkolbe.com](http://www.saintmaxkolbe.com)

Please do not miss out on this opportunity to experience for yourself, and to share with your children and your friends, the inspirational story of one man’s courageous expression of life and faith. May your life and faith be equally well lived and expressed.

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

August 19, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

Four brothers left home for college, and they became successful doctors and lawyers.

One evening, they chatted after having dinner together. They discussed the 95th birthday gifts they were able to give their elderly mother who moved to Florida.

The first said, "You know I had a big house built for Mama."

The second said, "And I had a large theater built in the house."

The third said, "And I had my Mercedes dealer deliver an SL600 to her."

The fourth said, "You know how Mama loved reading the Bible and you know she can't read anymore because she can't see very well. I met this preacher who told me about a parrot who could recite the entire Bible. It took ten preachers almost 8 years to teach him. I had to pledge to contribute \$50,000 a year for five years to the church, but it was worth it. Mama only has to name the chapter and verse, and the parrot will recite it."

The other brothers were impressed. After the celebration Mama sent out her "Thank You" notes.

She wrote: "Milton, the house you built is so huge that I live in only one room, but I have to clean the whole house. Thanks anyway."

"Marvin, I am too old to travel. I stay home; I have my groceries delivered, so I never use the Mercedes. The thought was good. Thanks."

"Michael, you gave me an expensive theater with Dolby sound and it can hold 50 people, but all of my friends are dead, I've lost my hearing, and I'm nearly blind. I'll never use it. Thank you for the gesture just the same."

"Dearest Melvin, you were the only son to have the good sense to give a little thought to your gift. The chicken was delicious. Thank you so much."

Love,  
Mama

Like Mama, I have so much to be grateful for.

On Sunday, our Feast Day, I had the privilege to witness five communities of our parish family gather around one Altar to celebrate a common identity as brothers and sisters in Christ. I take this moment to thank all those who worked so hard to prepare for this day, for those who prayed for this day and for those who participated in this day.

It is your goodness, your generosity, your faith that challenges me to strive all the more to serve our parish family in a manner which is consistent with your sacrifice and efforts and that I may be the pastor that you desire and that God intends.

May Saint Maximilian Kolbe intercede for you and all those you love.

*Monsignor Peter M Joyce*

August 12, 2012 – A View from the Rectory Window

O God, you filled your priest and martyr, Saint Maximilian Kolbe, with resilient zeal for the faith and profound love of neighbor.

As we celebrate our parish's first Feast Day in honor of Saint Maximilian Kolbe, grant that we who claim him as patron may be renewed by his witness in our love for the Eucharist, in our desire to strengthen our faith, in our love for each other and our service to all.

We make our prayer to You, Father, through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, in the Holy Spirit, through Christ our Lord. Amen

August 5, 2012 - The View from the Rectory Window

*Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided.*

*Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen*

Saint Maximilian Kolbe devoted his life and placed his trust in the assurances found in the Memorare [the prayer cited above], namely, that the Blessed Mother effectively intercedes to Her son for us in order that we might receive the fullness of grace that Christ Our Lord won for us by His passion, His death, and His resurrection.

The Miraculous Medal owes its origin to the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Chapel of the Rue du Bac, Paris, in the year 1830. She appeared as the Immaculate Conception to Catherine Laboure, a novice with the Daughters of Charity and a future saint.

On July 18, the Blessed Virgin, seated in this convent chapel, spoke gentle words of encouragement to the twenty-two year old novice. On November 27, the Virgin Mother returned, showing Sister Catherine the design of medal that would remind people of the love and protection that Our Lady continually offers to the People of God.

Saint Maximilian Kolbe saw the **Miraculous Medal** as a symbol of these assurances.

Saint Maximilian Kolbe recognized the powerful role that God had given Mary in the work of leading people to conversion and growth in holiness. He understood that the Miraculous Medal symbolized her active presence in the Church as Mediatrix of all the graces that flow from the Heart of Christ. For the next nine months Maximilian meditated upon the Miraculous Medal.

Saint Maximilian recommended that people wear it as an external sign of their consecration to Jesus Christ through his mother, mindful of Mary's promise to Saint Catherine that, "all who wear it will receive great graces." The ultimate goal is to bring about the reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and hasten the conversion of individuals, families, society and the entire world into a "civilization of love" as called for by our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II.

Beginning this weekend, in anticipation of our Parish Feast Day, you will be given a blessed Miraculous Medal and a Novena Prayer. Please pray this prayer each day for the nine days leading up to our Feast Day celebrated August 12. In this novena, we will beseech the Lord's blessing upon the people of our parish and those we love through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother and under the patronage of Saint Maximilian Kolbe.

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

July 29, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

### **Save the Date!**

On December 14, 2011, our parish communities became one under the patronage of Saint Maximilian Kolbe. Pope John Paul II described Saint Maximilian Kolbe as the “saint for the difficult twentieth century.” Since that day I have prayed every day to our patron Maximilian, asking his intercession and the intercession of Our Blessed Mother, that our parish would be faithful to the great blessings we have received.

I believe we are privileged to claim Maximilian Kolbe as our intercessor and guide. On **Sunday, August 12, at a special 11am Mass, at the Church of the Resurrection**, our parish family will celebrate its first Feast Day in honor of Saint Maximilian Kolbe.

Please join us. On this day:

- ◆ We have invited every living priest who has ever been assigned to our three churches to join us for this celebration.
- ◆ We will recall our past history in word, in picture, and in fellowship.
- ◆ We will dedicate the Statue of Saint Maximilian Kolbe on the campus at the Church of the Resurrection. We will also conclude a parish novena to the Immaculate Mary which we will have begun the preceding week.
- ◆ We will draw the names of the five 50/50 winners from our parish raffle.
- ◆ We will gather on the campus of the Church of the Resurrection for food that reflects some of the wonderful ethnicity of our parish (American, Polish, Spanish).
- ◆ There will be entertainment, amusements for our young people, door prizes, and having lost to the will of the parish council-I will be fated to the dunk tank.
- ◆ We will be together to celebrate the diversity of our new parish family and the graces that this diversity brings.

Following the 11am Mass, the day's events will primarily be outside. And so, if anyone has:

- ⇒ A tent they might lend us for the day.
- ⇒ A dessert they would be willing to share.

We ask you to contact the parish office (609) 390-0664 so that we might coordinate our bounty.

We stand at a privileged moment in the life of our parish. We recall with gratitude the faith and goodness of those who have gone before us; we celebrate our resolve to lay the foundation of a community of faith that is pleasing to God; and we express a hope that future generations will grow in the faith we have handed down to them.

I thank you for all you have done on behalf of our parish family. May Saint Maximilian Kolbe and the Immaculate Mary intercede for us all.

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

July 8, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

*“Sponges grow in the ocean. That just 'gets' me. I wonder how much deeper the ocean would be if that didn't happen.” --Stephen Wright*

Summer is a time of long days, short nights, hot weather, and cloudless blue skies by day with breathtaking starry panoramas by night. For many, it is a time of relaxation and leisure activities, of taking care of all the stuff you couldn't do in the winter, and also: vacations.

“What did you do on your summer vacation?” This is a common essay theme for returning school children. But let us ask: what is a vacation? It is literally a time to be empty (from the Latin *vacare*), and by extension to be free and unencumbered.

While we may not often think of our spiritual life as a vacation, I think it would be good to develop the sense of “becoming empty” in order to receive the presence of the Lord.

Our Holy Father Pope Benedict encouraged us to see that: "We have to reserve moments for God. [We have to] open our lives up to him, directing a thought to him, a reflection, a brief prayer.

"And above all, we mustn't forget that Sunday is the day of Our Lord, the day of the liturgy, [the day] to perceive in the beauty of our churches, in the sacred music and in the Word of God, the same beauty of our God, allowing him to enter into our being."

"Only in this way," the Holy Father concluded, "is our life made great; it is truly made a life."

“What did you do for vacation this summer?” Imagine saying, “I spent it with God.”

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

July 1, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

On this Independence Day weekend, I am reminded of the words of Cardinal James Gibbons, who served the Archdiocese of Baltimore for more than four decades, who said before his death in 1921: "I belong to a country where the civil government holds over us the aegis of its protection, without interfering with us in the legitimate exercise of our sublime mission as ministers of the Gospel of Christ. Our country has liberty without license and authority without despotism."

Cardinal Gibbons defended the proposition that one could be both a loyal American and a good Catholic. Now we are called to be loyal Americans precisely by being good Catholics. The words Blessed John Paul II spoke when he visited Baltimore in 1995 remain true: "The challenge facing you, dear friends, is to increase people's awareness of the importance for society of religious freedom; to defend that freedom against those who would take religion out of the public domain and establish secularism as America's official faith."

### **THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES**

In the Gospels, Jesus teaches that he is the vine and we are the branches. Just as a branch cannot survive when cut off from the vine, he says, "Without me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). We need to take this to heart in our struggle to defend religious liberty. If we want to preserve, uphold and foster religious liberty as understood and taught by the Church, and hold fast to the legacy of the Founding Fathers of the United States, then we need to pray diligently as communities, as families and as individuals.

With this in mind, the fourteen days, from June 21 – July 4, have been a special period of prayer leading up to the Fourth of July. During this time, the Church will celebrate a number of feasts days — including the feasts of St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher, who courageously laid down their lives when King Henry VIII arrogated to himself the leadership of the Church.

### **OPPORTUNITY FOR PRAYER**

We are encouraged to thank God for the freedoms with which he has endowed us and commend to the Lord those who have died in defending our liberty. Freedoms erode when they are taken for granted by citizens. Religious freedom erodes when, in the face of an increasingly secular culture, believers stop going to church and cease to bring convictions born of faith into family life, daily work and social settings. Conversely, when we consciously thank God for our freedoms, we will be more apt to protect them. Please consider the following prayer:

*"O God our Creator, through the power and working of the Holy Spirit, you call us to live our faith in the midst of the world, bringing the light and the saving truth of the Gospel to every corner of society. We ask you to bless us in our vigilance of the gift of religious liberty. Give us the strength of mind and heart to readily defend our freedoms when they are threatened; give us the courage in making our voices heard on behalf of the rights of your church and the freedom of conscience of all people of faith. Grant, we pray, O heavenly Father, a clear and united voice to all your sons and daughters gathered in your church in this decisive hour in the history of our nation, so that with every trial withstood and every danger overcome – for the sake of our children, our grandchildren, and all who come after us – this great land will always be "one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen."*

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

June 24, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

Last week I shared with many of you how people have commented how much these past twenty years of priesthood has aged me. These comments caused me to consider one wise man's words of wisdom regarding aging. I share them now with you:

### **George Carlin's Views on Aging**

"Do you realize that the only time in our lives when we like to get old is when we're kids? If you're less than 10 years old, you're so excited about aging that you think in fractions.

'How old are you?' 'I'm four and a half!' You're never thirty-six and a half. You're four and a half, going on five!  
That's the key.

You get into your teens, now they can't hold you back. You jump to the next number, or even a few ahead.

'How old are you?' 'I'm gonna be 16!' You could be 13, but hey, you're gonna be 16! And then the greatest day of your life . . . You become 21. Even the words sound like a ceremony. YOU BECOME 21. YESSSS!!!

But then you turn 30. Oooohh, what happened there? Makes you sound like bad milk! He TURNED; we had to throw him out. There's no fun now, you're Just a sour-dumpling. What's wrong? What's changed?

You BECOME 21, you TURN 30, then you're PUSHING 40. Whoa! Put on the brakes, it's all slipping away. Before you know it, you REACH 50 and your dreams are gone.

But wait!!! You MAKE it to 60. You didn't think you would!

So you BECOME 21, TURN 30, PUSH 40, REACH 50 and MAKE it to 60.

You've built up so much speed that you HIT 70! After that it's a day-by-day thing; you HIT Wednesday!

You get into your 80's and every day is a complete cycle; you HIT lunch; you TURN 4:30; you REACH bedtime. And it doesn't end there. Into the 90s, you start going backwards; 'I Was JUST 92.'

Then a strange thing happens. If you make it over 100, you become a little kid again. 'I'm 100 and a half!'

May you all make it to a healthy 100 and a half!!"

I echo Mr. Carlin's wish for you and those you love.

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

June 17, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

One evening a little girl and her parents were sitting around the table eating supper. The little girl said, "Daddy, you're the boss, aren't you?" Her Daddy smiled, pleased, and said yes. The little girl continued "That's because Mummy put you in charge, right?"

Maybe it is mom, but certainly it is God who has placed great responsibilities on fathers. As a sign of this we know that God refers to himself as our heavenly Father. God has given fathers several crucial responsibilities in the lives of their children.

Foremost, fathers are given the responsibility to teach their children about God:

***"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." (Deuteronomy 6:6-8).***

God also calls fathers to lead a godly life, so that they can be a righteous example. ***"In the future, when your son asks you, 'What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the LORD our God has commanded you?' tell him...The LORD commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the LORD our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today." (Deuteronomy 6:20, 24).***

Our example and the life we lead has significant consequences for the lives of our children. If we live up to the standard that God calls us to, God promises blessings upon our children. ***"In you our fathers put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them" (Psalm 22:4)***

Third, God calls fathers for responsibility in discipline. ***"Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father . . . Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness" (Hebrews 12:7-10)***

God rewards fathers who follow His instructions on parenting. By obeying your heavenly Father, you will not only bless your children – you too will be blessed. ***"The father of a righteous man has great joy; he who has a wise son delights in him." (Proverbs 23:24).***

With these and so many other responsibilities, may this Father's Day be a day of play . . .

. . . The story is told of a father of five children who came home with a toy. He summoned his children and asked which of them should be given the present. "Who is the most obedient one here? Who never talks back to Mom and does everything that Mom says to do?" He inquired. There were a few seconds of silence, and then all of the children said in one accord: "You play with it Daddy!"

Monsignor Peter Joyce

May 27, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

Memorial Day.

I believe that as Catholics we should understand the nature of Memorial Day better than anyone. For each time we assemble for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, "*We do this in memory of Him.*"

In the Gospel (John 8: 21-30) Jesus declared, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I AM..." Jesus, the innocent one and author of life, when lifted up on the cross, will become the source of life for all who acknowledge Him as God. For on the cross, Jesus took sin and death unto Himself and in that way destroyed them because He, the innocent one and author of life, had the power to do so.

On this Memorial Day we call to mind, give thanks and recommit ourselves to living in a manner that exemplifies the sacrifices of those who have made our life possible. We pray for those who continue to sacrifice so that we might know the freedoms we enjoy.

However, there is an important distinction that must be made between civil Memorial Day services and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

While Memorial Day recalls past sacrifices, the action of Jesus is given to us anew in every Mass when Jesus is lifted up again. His passion and death are made present every time we celebrate Mass. In his being, lifted up at the Consecration, sin and death are overcome and we believe in Him. And we are made present to Calvary!

This is essential to what we believe about the Eucharist. Our belief is not only that bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ, but that every Mass makes present the saving action of Jesus on Calvary.

Pope John Paul II, in his Apostolic Letter announcing the Year of the Eucharist *Mane Nobiscum Domine* (#15), put it this way:

**There is no doubt that the most evident dimension of the Eucharist is that it is a meal. ...Yet it must not be forgotten that the Eucharistic meal also has a profoundly and primarily sacrificial meaning. In the Eucharist, Christ makes present to us anew *the sacrifice offered once for all on Golgotha.* Present in the Eucharist as the Risen Lord, He nonetheless bears the marks of his passion, of which every Mass is a "memorial."**

My prayer is that on this Memorial Day we recommit ourselves to living in a manner that exemplifies the sacrifices of all those who have made our life possible, particularly to the sacrifice of Our Lord, which gives meaning to all other sacrifices.

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

May 20, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

**On October 22, 1978, at his Inauguration Ceremonies to the Papacy, Pope John Paul II proclaimed:**

A special greeting to youth: "You are the future of the world, you are the hope of the Church, you are my hope."

**On August 12, 1993, World Youth Day in Denver, Colorado,** Pope John Paul II said, "Young people of America and of the world, listen to what Christ the Redeemer is saying to you! 'To all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.' The World Youth Day challenges you to be fully conscious of who you are as God's dearly beloved sons and daughters."

I believe the encouragement of the Holy Father in Denver challenges the assumption that we hear so often said that, "Our young people are the future of the Church." The Holy Father challenged the young men and women to embrace their faith, their identity, and their responsibility that very day. Pope John Paul II blessed our young people and, in fact, us all with the following quote, which we should carry with us as we go through today. "Let God help you to be the change you want to see in the world, and let Him help you begin to make that change today."

**"The future starts today, not tomorrow." Pope John Paul II**

And so many of the many young men and women of the Parish of Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish remind us that they are not the 'future' of the Church, they are the Church today.

On Wednesday, May 16 (52) young men and women received the gift of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation. This very day through the laying on of hands and anointing with the blessed Chrism they were:

- rooted more deeply in the divine filiation [as children of God] which makes us cry, "Abba! Father!";
- united more firmly to Christ;
- strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us;
- bonded with the Church more perfectly;
- given a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross.

On Saturday, May 19 (40) young men and women received Our Lord in the Sacrament of their First Holy Communion. This very day, through the gift of the Body of Our Lord these young people are strengthened in their common vocation of all of Christ's disciples, a vocation to holiness and to the mission of evangelizing the world. They received strengthening, forgiveness of sins and all the graces they needed for the life according to the Spirit during this life as pilgrims on the march toward the homeland.

On Sunday, May 20, Bishop McHugh Regional Catholic School students and choir will participate in the 9:30 a.m. Mass on May 20th. The students, along with Principal Laura Tomlin, also invite prospective families to meet after the mass for a short presentation about the school and a question/answer session. Registration packets will be available. For more information, call 624-1900, ext. 21 or visit [www.bishopmchugh.com](http://www.bishopmchugh.com).

These are just a few of the innumerable examples experienced by our parish family that truly remind us that the many young men and women of the Parish of Saint Maximilian Kolbe are not the 'future' of the Church; they are the Church today.

*Monsignor Peter M Joyce*

May 13, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

Mother's Day provides us with the opportunity to acknowledge our mothers who so often do so much that goes unseen because of the way they humbly share their love. Mother's Day is that chance to say to our mothers that their love, their goodness, their sacrifices have not gone unnoticed. This day we pray for our mothers who have given us life and love, for our mothers who have lost a child through death, and for our mothers who have died, that they be blessed and consoled by our God who in His great love for us all allows no moment of our lives to be unnoticed.

I ask you also to consider some men who have given so much of themselves so that we all might know that God is ever present to us; be it in joy or sorrow, doubt or faith, injury or comfort, despair or hope, darkness or light.

On May 19, Monsignor John Conahan will celebrate his 50th Anniversary to God's Holy Priesthood. Monsignor Conahan we thank you, we honor you, we love you, and we pray that what you have handed on to us in your many years of faithful service may be returned to you in abundance. Ad multos annos!

On April 26, 2012 I received a letter from Bishop Galante informing us that Reverend Cesar A. Rebolledo Ramirez is being transferred from Part-Time Parochial Vicar for Hispanic Ministry, Saint Maximilian Kolbe, Marmora and All Saints Parish, Millville, to Parochial Vicar for Hispanic Ministry, Saint Bridget, Glassboro. We are so grateful for the many years of kind, faithful and dedicated pastoral service that Fr. Cesar has shared with our parish family. I ask you to pray for Fr. Cesar as he begins his new assignment. May God continue to bless his priesthood as we have been blessed by his gentle and loving ministry.

In this same letter, Bishop Galante has informed us that Reverend Armando Rodriguez Montoya is going to be assigned as Part-Time Parochial Vicar for Hispanic Ministry, All Saints Parish, Millville, and Saint Maximilian Kolbe, Marmora. These transfers become effective May 14, 2012. As we say farewell to Father Cesar, we also say welcome to Father Armando.

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

May 6, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

This weekend our parish welcomes Father Michael Romano who is, among his many responsibilities, the Director of Seminarians for our diocese. I believe that Father Romano brings to us all a gift to actively engage in the discernment of what is God's will for our lives. I fear that we attribute this discernment only to those who seek to serve God in the religious life. Or, that we believe that this discernment is concluded the moment we chart our life's family and career. However, no life is complete unless we ask; What is the will of God for my life? Answering this question and discerning God's will is a uniquely personal experience growing out of our particular character, abilities, gifts and talents. This discernment is never ending.

### **What is God's will for your life?**

Most importantly, we must pray. It is imperative to set aside time daily to talk with God. Simple prayer is sufficient. "Lord, what do you want me to do with my life?" Ask God for the wisdom to know what He is calling you to do and the courage to follow whatever He asks. Trust that God will let you know.

### **Honest Reflection**

Reflect honestly on what is going on inside of you right now. What questions are tugging at your heart and mind?

- Who am I?
- What fulfills me?
- Why did God create me?
- What is the purpose of my life?
- How has God been active throughout my life?
- When do I feel closest to God?
- How am I called to serve others?
- Where will I best fulfill my mission as a disciple of Jesus Christ?

The process of discernment is ongoing in every person's life and it can be challenging. It is important to remember that God is committed to guiding his chosen ones. However, there is no greater peace and fulfillment than uncovering and embracing the will of God for one's life.

We thank Father Romano for the gift of his priesthood, for helping us all to embrace our life's vocation and for calling forth a consciousness among our young men and women of the possibility of serving God in the priesthood and religious life. Please pray for Father Romano that his most important work bear fruit in our parish and in our diocese so that the Kingdom of God be manifest for ourselves and our children.

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

April 29, 2012 - A VIEW FROM THE RECTORY WINDOW

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS!

*“God chose us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to be holy.”* (cf. Eph 1:4) God has chosen each person in Christ to live out that holiness through a particular vocation. Rev. Michael M. Romano, Director of Vocations, will be at our parish on Sunday, May 6, 2012 to preach about religious vocations. While here, he will be available to meet with any young person with questions about the call to the priesthood or consecrated life.

If you would like to set up a time to meet with Fr. Michael Romano that day, you can contact him beforehand at [michael.romano@camdendiocese.org](mailto:michael.romano@camdendiocese.org) or 856-583-2858. Together, we pray that more people from our parish may generously respond to God’s call to the priesthood and religious life!

With my gratitude . . .

I write to thank all parishioners and guests for your faith filled participation in the special parish events and services in Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish throughout Holy Week and Easter.

My gratitude goes to the Women’s Auxiliary of the Knights of Columbus who did an impressive job planning and presenting our annual Parish Seder Dinner.

I extend a particular thank you to our Choir and Musicians and to the Parish Liturgy Committee for the beautiful Holy Week Liturgies as well as your preparation of our three churches in the appropriate decor for each Liturgy.

I thank our Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers for your faithful dedication to your ministries and for providing such good example to our equally dedicated Altar Servers! Your gifts of time and talent as well as the generosity of many who served “behind the scenes”, exemplified to all who worshipped at our Churches the goodness that typifies our community of faith.

I thank you all and ask for God’s continued blessing in your lives.

*Monsignor Peter Joyce*

April 8, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

*“. . . he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place” ( John 20:6-7).*

I have always been fascinated by what, at first glance, may appear to be a small detail in Saint John’s account of Jesus’ resurrection.

In the telling of this greatest event known to all people, why does John make a point of where Peter and the other disciple find the wrappings?

The shroud and cloths in which Jesus’ body was wrapped and bound are found on the ground; but the cloth that covered Jesus’ face was rolled up separately. It seems very deliberate, planned.

We are told that when John went to the tomb, he saw and believed. What did he see? *“The burial cloths there, and the cloth that covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place”*. John, who had an intimate friendship with Jesus, is the only Gospel writer to mention this separate head covering. Perhaps it made an impression on him because it was rolled up as he had frequently seen Jesus roll the bed cloths He slept on as they traveled from town to town.

Is it possible that at His resurrection Jesus made sure to leave such a small sign for his friend? Is it possible that something so seemingly insignificant, so particular, so very human would happen at the resurrection? Is it possible that he would share some similar sign with you and me?

I know that each day of my life signs of Jesus’ love for me are made manifest. Some days I fail to see, while other days I am awed at His presence.

This Easter, I thank you, the people and parishioners of Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish, for revealing His presence to me through you, both in joy and in sorrow. I have been encouraged by your generosity of time, talent and treasure to our parish and to our sisters and brothers in need. I have been consoled by your patient understanding and your willingness to forgive me and one another as we strive to be the community of faith our baptism demands. I have been inspired and energized by your enthusiasm to embrace the new life of our parish and its immeasurable possibilities. So many times you have revealed God to me.

My prayer for you and all those you love this Easter is that you have the eyes of faith to recognize the rolled up cloths Jesus leaves you in the midst and joys and sufferings of your life. May His resurrection touch you this day and every day, Alleluia!

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

April 1, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

I never thought I would be celebrating a Triduum here. The liturgical moments of the Sacred Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday) are deeply embedded in my life from my time as an altar server at the Church of the Resurrection. And now, by some grace of God, I am here as pastor of the churches of Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish. My memories are not just as three days spent in church and in prayer, but they are memories that are awash in smells, words, tastes, sights, and feelings, memories from my childhood to my present growing in faith. Each Holy Week I have been drawn, almost despite myself, out of my day-to-day and invited to pause and remember the passion of Jesus but also to remember and renew my own faith.

As I reflect on why the Triduum has marked me so profoundly in the past three themes developed; hospitality, humility, and hope. I share with you my desire that these themes mark us all.

### **HOSPITALITY**

“When Jesus had finished the meal he got up from the table and began to wash his disciples’ feet.” On Holy Thursdays, I have watched as priests, individuals and families came, washing each other, a simple act of love that our culture does not always take. How profound to wash each other’s feet, what intimacy, what hospitality. Washing feet, Jesus takes the place of the servant and asks us to do the same. I remember helping an older woman put her shoe on and get back to her seat. Somehow I knew I was responsible for her and that she was responsible for me. As I watched her find her seat I thought of all those faithful men and women, about her age, who taught me the faith. Coming home this year, I am sure I will be remembering so many who have gone before me who made this moment possible for me.

### **HUMILITY**

Good Friday has always felt different from other days, maybe because I have felt hungry from my fast, but mostly, I have noticed the starkness of the churches. The vigil light was gone. The one constant in a Catholic church, the light marking the presence of the Blessed Sacrament was missing. The church seemed empty, much like my stomach. And then we begin the Good Friday liturgy differently from all others by prostrating ourselves in front of the altar. This act of silence, kneeling, or lying in the church reminds me of so many people who sacrifice their lives for Jesus who, in His submission to the cross, showed God’s love for those who are vulnerable and forgotten in the world. I have watched so many people in our parish this year perform acts of love for someone in need. I am humbled by your goodness, and I believe that my own hunger will seem less significant as I pray with you this Good Friday.

### **HOPE**

Holy Saturday night gathering for the Great Easter Vigil...the new fire, light piercing the darkness, intoning “Christ Our light.” The chanting of the Exultet, this ancient prayer of the Church, that always connects me to the very beginning of time, to choirs of Angels and all creation gathered around God’s throne! Who am I to be so favored?! Once more we tell our story of God’s love and intervention in our history – but somehow, for me, on Holy Saturday it feels more complete. We call upon the saints, and we watch as women and men are baptized in the waters of new life; washed clean, dying to their old life, finding God, and rising to new life, laying down their burdens, responding to God’s gentle invitation. And then I hear God’s gentle invitation to remember my own baptism as the blessed Easter water touches me.

When Mary arrived at the tomb, the angel reminds her of what she intuitively already knew, “He is not here He is risen.” She then sees the gardener and when he calls her name “Mary!” that intimacy of friendship lifts her burdens, and she sees Jesus. In your friendship and support this past year you have lifted many of my burdens. I have prayed with you all year, and in many moments I have heard my name called anew by name by Jesus. My prayer for you this Easter is that you will be reminded that even in our darkest moments Jesus is alive and with us!

*Monsignor Peter M. Joyce*

March 25, 2012 - A View from the Rectory Window

A priest prayed to God in turmoil over what he saw as the sinful state of his city, "Lord, most of the people in the city have no interest in following you, and the rest are having a hard time holding on!" God heard the prayer and sent down an angel to investigate the claim. Later the angel reported back that, indeed, things were much worse than the minister indicated. 98% of the city was more sinful than Sodom and Gomorrah, and the remaining faithful 2% were struggling.

God considered what to do for those who were staying true to the faith. Finally, God decided to send a letter of encouragement to the faithful few saying . . .

Oh, I'm sorry. Would you like to read my copy?

Despite the perhaps misplaced attempt at humor, I believe it critical that we all hear the words of Jesus' encouragement to His people; words spoken this past week in the Church of the Resurrection at our communal penance service. At this liturgy, through the ministry of several priests who joined us, we heard Jesus say, "My child your sins are forgiven. . . Go in peace."

We may protest that we do not know what our sins are, but perhaps we are well aware of the lack in our life. I believe repentance can begin here. The lack of serenity, direction, knowing, and fulfillment are just a few examples of the gnawing pain that we are not whole. In confessing that we are not complete in ourselves we can acknowledge that we are in need of Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Life. "Be the first to admit your sins and you will be justified." The author Flannery O'Connor sagely observed, "To know oneself is, above all, to know what one lacks. It is to measure oneself against the Truth and not the other way around."

As our Lenten journey is leading to culmination, may we seek and discover the encouragement that belongs to God alone.

### *Thank You*

Have you noticed the new kneelers in our church pews? Not only do they look great but they're stronger and much kinder to our knees! For gathering the supplies and coordinating all the work for this project I thank Chris Blake and Agnes Bross and their dedicated crew of helpers. Their time and talent has produced a great result that we will continue to appreciate for many years to come!

*Monsignor Peter M Joyce*

March 18, 2012 – View from the Rectory Window

### **Fish for Lent**

John Smith moved into a large Catholic neighborhood. On the first Friday of Lent, John was outside grilling a big juicy steak on his grill. Meanwhile, all of his neighbors were eating cold tuna fish for supper. This went on each Friday of Lent. On the last Friday of Lent, the neighborhood men got together and decided that something had to be done about John. He was tempting them to eat meat each Friday of Lent, and they couldn't take it anymore. They decided to try to convert John to become a Catholic. They went over and talked to him and were so happy that he decided to join all of his neighbors and become a Catholic. They took him to Church, and the Priest sprinkled some water over him, and said, "You were born a Protestant, you were raised a Protestant, and now you are Catholic." The men were so relieved now that their biggest Lenten temptation was resolved.

The next year's Lenten season rolled around. The first Friday of Lent came, and just at supper time, when the neighborhood was sitting down to their tuna fish dinner, came the wafting smell of steak cooking on a grill. The neighborhood men could not believe their noses! WHAT WAS GOING ON? They called each other up and decided to meet over in John's yard to see if he had forgotten it was the first Friday of Lent. The group arrived just in time to see John standing over his grill with a small pitcher of water. He was sprinkling some water over his steak on the grill, saying, "You were born a cow, you were raised a cow, and now you are a fish."

I hope your Lenten Penance is transforming you rather than the other way around.

*Monsignor Peter M Joyce*