

The following are excerpts from the message of His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, for the celebration of the World Day of Peace; January 1, 2011. The message is entitled, **“Religious Freedom: The Path to Peace”**.

At the beginning of the new year I offer good wishes to each and all for serenity and prosperity, but especially for peace. Sadly, the year now ending has again been marked by persecution, discrimination, terrible acts of violence and religious intolerance.

My thoughts turn in a special way to the beloved country of Iraq, which continues to be a theatre of violence and strife as it makes its way towards a future of stability and reconciliation. I think of the recent sufferings of the Christian community, and in particular the reprehensible attack on the Syro-Catholic Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Baghdad, where on 31 October two priests and over fifty faithful were killed as they gathered for the celebration of Holy Mass. In the days that followed, other attacks ensued, even on private homes, spreading fear within the Christian community and a desire on the part of many to emigrate in search of a better life. I assure them of my own closeness and that of the entire Church, a closeness which found concrete expression in the recent Special Assembly for the Middle East of the Synod of Bishops. The Synod encouraged the Catholic communities in Iraq and throughout the Middle East to live in communion and to continue to offer a courageous witness of faith in those lands.

I offer heartfelt thanks to those Governments which are working to alleviate the sufferings of these, our brothers and sisters in the human family, and I ask all Catholics for their prayers and support for their brethren in the faith who are victims of violence and intolerance. In this context, I have felt it particularly appropriate to share some reflections on religious freedom as the path to peace. It is painful to think that in some areas of the world it is impossible to profess one's religion freely except at the risk of life and personal liberty. In other areas we see more subtle and sophisticated forms of prejudice and hostility towards believers and religious symbols. At present, Christians are the religious group which suffers most from persecution on account of its faith. Many Christians experience daily affronts and often live in fear because of their pursuit of truth, their faith in Jesus Christ and their heartfelt plea for respect for religious freedom. This situation is unacceptable, since it represents an insult to God and to human dignity; furthermore, it is a threat to security and peace, and an obstacle to the achievement of authentic and integral human development.

Religious freedom expresses what is unique about the human person, for it allows us to direct our personal and social life to God, in whose light the identity, meaning and purpose of the person are fully understood. To deny or arbitrarily restrict this freedom is to foster a reductive vision of the human person; to eclipse the public role of religion is to create a society which is unjust, inasmuch as it fails to take account of the true nature of the human person; it is to stifle the growth of the authentic and lasting peace of the whole human family.

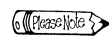
For this reason, I implore all men and women of good will to renew their commitment to building a world where all are free to profess their religion or faith, and to express their love of God with all their heart, with all their soul and with all their mind (cf. Mt 22:37)....

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The world needs God. It needs universal, shared ethical and spiritual values, and religion can offer a precious contribution to their pursuit, for the building of a just and peaceful social order at the national and international levels.

Peace is a gift of God and at the same time a task which is never fully completed. A society reconciled with God is closer to peace, which is not the mere absence of war or the result of military or economic supremacy, much less deceptive ploys or clever manipulation. Rather, peace is the result of a process of purification and of cultural, moral and spiritual elevation involving each individual and people, a process in which human dignity is fully respected. I invite all those who wish to be peacemakers, especially the young, to heed the voice speaking within their hearts and thus to find in God the stable point of reference for attaining authentic freedom, the inexhaustible force which can give the world a new direction and spirit, and overcome the mistakes of the past. In the words of Pope Paul VI, to whose wisdom and farsightedness we owe the institution of the World Day of Peace: “It is necessary before all else to provide peace with other weapons – different from those destined to kill and exterminate mankind. What are needed above all are moral weapons, those which give strength and prestige to international law – the weapon, in the first place, of the observance of pacts”. [18] Religious freedom is an authentic weapon of peace, with an historical and prophetic mission. Peace brings to full fruition the deepest qualities and potentials of the human person, the qualities which can change the world and make it better. It gives hope for a future of justice and peace, even in the face of grave injustice and material and moral poverty. May all men and women, and societies at every level and in every part of the earth, soon be able to experience religious freedom, the path to peace!

(The full text may be found on the papal website: www.vatican.va.)



Attention all Youth...we are back in session!

I hope you had a great Christmas Vacation and Happy New Year! We have lots of different events and activities coming up within our youth ministry program this year! Here are the youth group nights for Catholic Connection Youth Ministries:

Tuesday, Jan 4th: St Andrew (7th-12th graders) 7-9PM
located in the Gym.

Wednesday, Jan 5th: Blessed Sacrament (5th-8th graders) 7-9PM
located in the Multipurpose Room

Thursday, Jan 6th: Sacred Heart (7th-12th graders) 7-9PM
located in the Auditorium

If you have any questions about our youth ministry program, please feel free to contact, Jesse Spanogle, our youth minister, @ Catholicconnection@gmail.com.

Peace. Jesse.

*******Altar Society News*******

The next meeting of the Altar Society will be Wednesday, January 12th in the audi at 7PM. The board will meet at 6PM. Anyone interested in becoming a member is welcome to “come check us out.” We will have the “Lake Erie Sound” that day to entertain us.....sounds like fun! Please pray for good weather so many can attend.



*Mass Intentions
for the Week*

Monday, January 3rd *The Most Holy Name of Jesus*

8:30 - Lavina Graf - Susan Casella

Tuesday, January 4th *St Elizabeth Ann Seton*

8:30 - Loretta Loney - Knights of Columbus

Wednesday, January 5th *St John Neumann*

8:30 - Frances Froess - Flynn Family

Thursday, January 6th *Blessed Andre Bessette*

8:30 - Communion Service

Friday, January 7th *St Raymond of Penafort*

8:30 - Carmela Ferrante - Bob & Carole Ferrando

Saturday, January 8th

4:30 - the Parishioners of Sacred Heart Parish

Sunday, January 9th *The Baptism of the Lord*

9:30 - Jodie Hillbrich—Bob, Bob and Ann

11:30 - Pasquale "Pat" DiPaolo - Family

Priest Schedule for

Saturday, 4:30PM - Fr. Detisch

Sunday, 9:30AM and 11:30AM - Fr. Detisch

The Sanctuary Candle is burning in memory of †Caz Klemen from Mary and Family.

Scripture Readings for Next Week

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7 Acts 10:34-38 Matthew 3:13-17



Golden Hearts

The Golden Hearts will meet in the Church Audi on Thursday, January 6th, 2011 at 12:15PM...Judy Dormann of the Fort Leboeuf Historical Society will be speaking to us. If you have any Christmas cookies left, feel free to bring them, thanks.

New members are always welcome.

March for Life Bus Trip

Attend the annual March for Life in Washington, DC on Monday, January 24th. Buses chartered by People for Life will leave Erie Sunday evening, January 23rd at 11PM and return about 1:30AM, January 25th. Students and families on tight budgets are encouraged to inquire about sponsorships. Reservations should be made as soon as possible. Send \$40 per seat to People for Life/PO Box 1126/Erie, Pa 16512. For more information or to use a credit card, call (814) 882-1333 or visit www.peopleforlife.org.

*People for Life's annual Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast will be held on Saturday, January 15th at the Ambassador Conference Center. The main speaker will be Dr Joel Brind, an authority on the science linking abortion with breast cancer. Preservations are \$12.50, \$6.50 for children ages 3—12, and free for children under 3. Purchase by January 10th. For more info or to use a credit card, call (814) 882-1333 or visit www.peopleforlife.org.

*People for Life invites you to participate in the Erie March for Life on Saturday, January 8th, 2011. Gather at the Perry Square Gazebo by 10:45AM. The March will begin at 11:00 and conclude with a brief Memorial Service at the Gazebo. Feel good knowing you have been a voice for the voiceless and a witness to the sanctity of human life.

This Week in our Parish

Sunday –NO Religious Education today

Monday - Boy Scouts

Knights of Columbus 6PM in audi

Tuesday –Food Pantry

RCIA in Findlay Room at 7:30 PM

Wednesday - Meeting #2 at 7PM for Confirmation in Church

Thursday - *Golden Hearts* in audi at 12:15PM

Youth Group in audi at 7PM

Friday - *Church Cleaning Group #1* (Lorraine Squeglia)

January 7th in the AM

Sunday - *Religious Education resumes today..Jan. 9th.*



ATTENTION KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Please be informed that the January monthly meeting will be held on **Monday, January 3rd, 2011 at 7PM** in the Auditorium, with the Chapter meeting to follow at 7PM. Food and refreshments will be served after the Chapter meeting.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS



In Memory of:

HJ & Pearl Blackmond

Anna Spero

Eda Mattioli

Dorothy Jones

Nick Jones

Ruth & Elmer Schwab

Jerry (Tom) Yeager

Homer & Rose Ball

Ridenbaugh Family

Deceased Children

Ed, Marie & Richard Knecht

William J. Hain

Marion MacKrell

Gram & Gramps Mattes

For Parents & Sisters of M/M Attilio Ciccozzi

Gifts from:

M/M Robert Martucci

M/M Michael P. Case

Carlo Ricchinti

Louis Spero

Carmen Matioli

William Estep

Joni Jones

Tony Mucciarone

Gary G. Miller

Traut Family

Ignazio & Giovanna Totleben

Angelo & Connie Casella

Kwitowski & Fedei Family

William Maloney

Gramma & Grampa Fahey



A Baptismal Preparation Session for parents anticipating the birth or baptism of their child will be offered on *Thursday, February 24, 2011 at 7:30PM in the Findlay Room.*

All parents are expected to attend this session before their child is baptized. Sponsors may also attend.

Please call the rectory office at 456-6256, ext. 100, to make your reservation.