

Week Behind

Teachers' Appreciation Week- As part of Teacher Appreciation Week, we celebrated our St. Joseph schoolteachers the week of May 3 to May 7. Teachers play a critical role in educating and shaping our children, the future leaders of our country. These kind, patient, hard-working, dedicated, and understanding professionals help mold our children and guide them in positive directions, especially in Christian faith. We entrust our children with teachers, and they affect their lives daily. No matter where we are in life, a teacher has influenced us. The school theme was "Welcome to your Magical Week!" and on Wednesday the students were wearing their best Disney outfit! Thank you to members of PTO for organizing this week. The teachers really felt the love from both our school and parish communities.

May Crowning- Last weekend we had the May Crowning of Mary in our parish. I want to thank all the children who crowned Our Lady at each Mass, and I want to give a big thank you to the volunteer who decorated the statue of Our Lady.

Rosary During the Month of May—During the month of May we are praying the rosary as a community every Saturday at 9:00 AM in front of the grotto of Our Lady right outside of the small church. Everyone is welcome to join.

Lunch with Priest from the Area- on Wednesday May 5th, Father Robert Turner hosted the priests from the Tri-Cities area for lunch at the El Chapala restaurant here in Kennewick. This event gave us priests an opportunity to spend time with our neighboring priests and to say goodbye to Father Rex Familiar for his excellent service as hospital chaplain in the Pasco area. May the blessing of the Lord be upon Father Rex as we wish him the best in his new assignment.

Seminarian Ethan Pfeifer- on Sunday April 9th, our seminarian Ethan Pfeifer, who has been with us since last October, is going to leave us to start a new assignment. This summer he will be working with the migrant workers in Yakima. He will then resume his philosophical studies at Mt. Angel Seminary in Oregon. If you see him over the weekend, please thank him for his work here in our parish. He has been a great addition to the parish staff and to different ministries throughout the past couple of months. I want to thank Ethan for his work, especially for his assistance in livestreaming the weekday Masses, as well as for supervising the many volunteers who helped every weekend checking people in for Mass and making sure that the COVID-19 protocols were being followed for the safety of the entire community. On behalf of everyone in our parish community, I would like to express my most sincere thanks to Ethan for his time with us. Please continue to pray for him as he continues discerning his calling to the priesthood.

Volunteers- We continue to need volunteers for every Mass before and after the celebration of the Mass. We need parishioners who can donate their time to register and check-in parishioners when they come to church and to disinfect the main sanctuary after every Mass. I am most thankful to Ethan and the many volunteers who continue to offer their time and their talents each weekend. However, we are still in need more volunteers. Please call the parish office if

you are interested in this ministry so that we may be able to continue keeping our parishioners safe.

Week Ahead

Priests Retreat--Our annual Retreat for Priests is scheduled for Monday, May 10th to Friday, May 14th. Fathers Riccardo, Cesar, and I will be at the retreat during the day. We will still celebrate the morning and evening Masses during the week. Please keep us in your prayers as we participate in this retreat. Our retreat will be directed by the Most Rev. Daniel E. Flores, Bishop of Brownsville, Texas since 2009. He received a Masters of Divinity in 1987 from Holy Trinity Seminary. In 1988, he was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Corpus Christi. He received his S.T.D. degree at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in 2000 and returned to Corpus Christi as Chancellor of the Diocese. In August 2001, he served in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston as a member of the formation faculty, and later served as the Vice-Rector, of St. Mary's Seminary. He also was on the teaching faculty at the University of St. Thomas School of Theology. In October 2006, he was named Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Detroit and served until he was appointed as the Sixth Bishop of Brownsville on December 9, 2009. Bishop Flores is a former member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Migration and in February 2017 hosted a meeting of bishops along the Texas-Mexico border. He presently serves on three USCCB Committees: Communications; Doctrine; and Evangelization and Catechesis. We are blessed to have Bishop Flores as our retreat master.

Deacon Ordinations- Congratulation to Gene Ockinga of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Wenatchee and our seminarian Christian Melendez-Cruz who will be ordained deacons on Friday, May 14 at 6 p.m. at St. Joseph, 625 S. Elliott Ave., Wenatchee. I ask our St. Joseph community to continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Please offer your prayers for Gene as he prepares for service as a permanent deacon and for Christian as he enters his final year of studies and preparation for the priesthood.