

## B.S.P. WEEKLY EMAIL — January 17, 2025

Years ago, on a rocky coastline, a shore town's inhabitants began noticing that more and more trade ships were passing by — and many were bottoming out on the rocks. So, the townspeople decided to build a lighthouse to warn passing ships about the danger. The lighthouse worked to warn many ships away. But some ships continued to come too close. They would hit the rocks, and their sailors would have to be rescued from the treacherous waters, sometimes in icy conditions. The people enthusiastically began the work of saving sailors — and to make the work easier, many built their homes near the beautiful lighthouse.

As time wore on and the people got older, and their houses became better appointed, they began to resent the sailors they had to save. It was hard to go out in the cold, and the sailors were messy and tended to use bad language — and hadn't each of them failed to heed the lighthouse warning in the first place? They stopped their rescue missions, figuring that keeping the lighthouse light burning was enough.

New "rescuers" had to rise up and make a special commitment to save the sailors. They built a better-positioned lighthouse and continued the rescues as needed. Those new "rescuers" are us if we take to heart the words of Jesus, "You are the light of the world; your light must shine so that others can see the good you do and give glory to God."

Blessed Sacrament Parish and the entire Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is beginning an evangelization process. We want - we need - to reach out to lapsed Catholics as well as the many unchurched people here in West Virginia. The Disciple Maker Index is a survey to help us develop a plan. In addition, it will be valuable for the Staff and Pastoral Council in seeking to know our needs and possibilities going forward.

You can fill the 20 minute survey on line or on paper after two upcoming weekend Masses: Saturday, January 18 after 4:00pm Mass or Sunday, January 26 after 9:00am Mass. You may also do it online here: <https://portal.catholicleaders.org/dmi/survey/x1a236>. Please take time to complete the Disciple Maker Index Survey. Time is running out.

May God bless you for taking the time to help everyone here at Blessed Sacrament Parish. Fr. Paul

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Phone: Office (304) 744-5523

Cell: (304) 433-7472.

Email:

[pjw424@gmail.com](mailto:pjw424@gmail.com)

Parish website

<https://www.blessedsacramentwv.org>

Faith in West Virginia

<https://faithinwv.org/latest-bulletin/>

This Sunday's Readings

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/011925.cfm>

### MYSTIC MORSELS

Be who you are and say how you feel,  
because those who mind don't matter,  
and those who matter don't mind.

— Dr. Seuss

We have what we seek, it is there all the time,  
and if we give it time, it will make itself known to us.  
— Thomas Merton

## Live, Local, and Late-breaking

### **COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT MEETING & UPDATE**

Our meeting this Sunday is cancelled. We will reschedule it.

Phase 1 of our community garden project has been successfully completed. As we move forward, we are excited to share details about Phase 2. Determining Progress for Phase 2 will completely rely on the donations we receive from our community members and supporters. Your contributions will directly influence the timeline and scope of the upcoming work.

As we embark on Phase 2, we are currently evaluating preferred styles of raised garden beds, examining eco-friendly materials for construction, and selecting the best soil mix to ensure robust plant growth. We welcome input from the community regarding seed and planting choices to foster a diverse and thriving garden. Together, let's make our community garden a vibrant space for all! For more updates or to make a donation, please contact us. Thank you for your continued support.

**POEM**      All This Makes Us  
We are all great rivers  
flowing to their end.

Swirling inside us is  
the silt of ages and  
creatures and lands

and rain that has fallen  
for millions of years.

All this makes us  
cloudy with mud,

unable to see God.

As we struggle for  
clarity and the open sky,

the Lord keeps saying  
the same thing:

Come to me now and be blessed,  
Come.

— Hafiz (1320 – 1389)

## **PRAYER**

I cannot dance, Lord, unless you lead me.  
If you want me to leap with abandon,  
You must intone the song.  
Then I shall leap into love,  
From love into knowledge,  
From knowledge into enjoyment,  
And from enjoyment beyond all human sensations.  
There I want to remain yet want also to circle higher still.  
—Mechthild of Magdeburg (1207 - 1297)

## **CARBONATED GRACE**

There is a legend which states that in the late middle-ages, the Russian Czar had come to the conclusion that in order to unite his country, there would have to be one state religion to which everyone should belong. He considered carefully all his options. Finally, he settled on a short list of three: Islam, Buddhism, or Christianity. He called representatives from each of the three religions to his court in Russia and asked them to state the case for their religion before himself and his advisors. The Muslim representative spoke first. He spoke of the humaneness of Islam, of its tolerance for others, its respect for science and culture, and how it came with a complete legal system that had been refined and perfected through the centuries. When he had finished his pitch, he asked the Czar if there was anything else he would like to know. "One thing," the Czar told him, "Does Allah look favorably upon Vodka?" The Muslim emissary shook his head and told him no, that alcohol was an abomination to Allah, and was not permitted.

"Next!" cried the Czar, and the Buddhist missionary was ushered in. The Buddhist monk explained the basic teachings of the Buddha, how all of life was suffering and how the Buddha showed the way to end suffering. Finally, the King was getting bored and said, "I'll tell you how I stop suffering. Vodka! What does your Buddha have to say about that?" The Buddhist monk told him that intoxicants were a hindrance to enlightenment, and were not permitted in Buddhism.

"Next!" cried the Czar, and a Christian Orthodox monk was ushered in. But before he could even begin teaching his elementary catechism, the Czar stopped him short. "Just tell me one thing, does your Jesus allow vodka?" "Are you kidding?" the monk said, "We will give you wine and bread at every Eucharistic celebration." "Now I know what I am!" proclaimed the Czar, "I am a Christian! Baptize me, and all of my people." -- We can imagine that he also ordered them to break out the vodka in celebration.