

Father Paul's Weekly Email

September 15, 2023

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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/091723.cfm>

Homily Preview <https://brittlepaper.com/2013/03/untranslatable-african-words-case-ilunga/>
Wednesday Bible Handout not available at publishing time
This Sunday's Bulletin <https://blessedsacramentwv.org/download/september-17-2023/?wpdmdl=1446&refresh=650463bd9830f1694786493>

Whenever I left Williamson, WV after my last Sunday Mass from 1986-1989, the only radio stations I could tune into were from small churches up narrow hollows or in tiny towns. The message was the same week after week, minister after minister, church after church: "Accept Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior or you will suffer hellfire and eternal damnation!" I never thought allowing Jesus to be an intimate part of our lives was bad. Just scaring people into faith is wrong. Worse, it was the same frenetic, hyperventilated message. The only sermon done again and again.

Every time I listened a few minutes, I would always think, "And then what?" The Roman Catholic Church has important answers to that question. Well more than half of our Sundays when the priest wears green vestments, we celebrate Ordinary Time. The readings and homilies answer that question by addressing what it means to be a true disciple and genuine follower of Jesus Christ.

"But wait, there's more!" as the late pitchman Billy Mays would exclaim. The Church has a mission to undertake to do what Christians have done from the very start in one form or another.

- Evangelize and share the Gospel. This is the reason we have the Order of Christian Initiation of Adult which has just begun anew and in earnest. When parishioners do their best to live their lives in such a way others can see that Jesus makes a difference in their lives.
- Nurture the faith of our children through our example, Sunday Faith Formation, Vacation Bible School, Youth Group, Camp Leon, etc.
- Educate parishioners to help them grow in faith, hope, and love. We have Bible Study and Bible Sharing, the F.O.R.M.E.D. website, and a number of opportunities for adults at the same time as our children and youth.
- Sunday Mass gives us an opportunity to worship God, and participate in a variety of ministries: Server, Reader, Eucharistic Minister, Choir member, Musician, Gift Bearer. Good music, preaching, worship, and hospitality help us grow.

- Outreach to the poor and needy outside and within the parish because what we do for one of these least ones, we do for Jesus. We do this especially well at Blessed Sacrament through volunteering and financially supporting these good works.
- Fellowship is spending time enjoying one another before and after Mass and other opportunities like Pancake Dinner.

So there you have it. We have a lot of answers to the question I asked years ago in Mingo County — “And then what?” Here’s another question, “How well are you taking advantage of opportunities to minister and learn?”



POEM Ten Thousand Flowers in the Spring

Ten thousand flowers in spring, the moon in autumn,
 a cool breeze in summer, snow in winter.
 If your mind isn't clouded by unnecessary things,
 this is the best season of your life.

— Wu Men from *The Enlightened Heart: An Anthology* by Stephen Mitchell

PRAYER Help us to Trust

O Lord, whose way is perfect,
 help us always to trust in your goodness,
 that walking with you and following you in all simplicity,
 we may possess quiet and contented minds
 and may cast all our care on you, who cares for us.
 Grant this, O Lord, for your dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ.
 — Christina Rossetti

CARBONATED GRACE ***

Did you know?

Light travels faster than sound.

That's why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.

What's the difference between a hippo and a zippo?
One is really heavy and the other is a little lighter.

How do you throw a space party?
You planet.

Hear about the new restaurant called Karma?
There's no menu - you get what you deserve.

What do you get when you mix alcohol and literature?
Tequila mockingbird.

I like European food so I decided to
Russia over there because I was Hungary.
After Czech'ing the menu I ordered Turkey.
When I was Finnished I told the waiter
'I Polished everything off.
There is Norway I could eat another bite'

*** Anne Lamott calls laughter *carbonated grace*