

SUNDAY, JUNE 27, 2010
TWELFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

PASTOR'S COLUMN

The last couple of weeks were eventful for a number of reasons. First of all we had a great Flag Day Ceremony. Every year this event becomes greater and more impressive. Our whole school was in attendance as were local officials. We particularly welcomed Peter Vallone, Jr., our City Council Member. He has always been a great supporter of our parish and of our parish school (his alma mater!) I would like to particularly commend him on his standing up to the Board members of the Empire State Building on their bigoted and prejudiced exclusion of showing the honorary colors of Blue and white on the occasion of Mother Theresa's 100th birthday. They thought that she was too religious! I guess if you win the Nobel Peace Prize and have a stamp dedicated to you by the US government that is not enough to the narrow minded Board of the Empire State Building. This same group honored the Anniversary of the Communist Revolution in China! It did not bother them that Red China was responsible for the deaths of millions of her own people!

It was Council member Peter Vallone, Jr. that introduced a resolution to urge them to reconsider their decision. We thank him for fighting for the values we all cherish as Americans. Would Communist China honor the American Revolution that brought freedom and democracy to large numbers of people?

This is the importance of Flag Day. It reminds us of the greatness of the American System of Government and honors the people who have died to preserve it. Great thanks to Mario Massa and our Knights of Columbus as well as Michael Meloni, our Youth Minister and the MC for the event for a job well done. Thanks to the Police Band that graced us with their wonderful musicianship and for all who took part: our school, the Squires, the Catholic War Veterans, the honor guard of Xavier High School and countless others.

Another great event in the last few weeks was our school's graduation ceremony. We are justly proud of the high quality of our education that we provide for our children. This class is a wonderful group of young men and women who will go far in bringing the wonders of our Catholic Education system to all they meet. Congrats to the grads!

A WORD FROM OUR SEMINARIAN

My name is Luigi Benigni, I am 23 years old. I was born in Rome in April 1987. I am the oldest of ten children, of which my youngest brother is 19 years younger than I. My second brother, the third child, is in the seminary in Boston, MA. I am studying at the Redemptoris Mater Seminary in New Jersey for the diocese of Brooklyn. When I was four years old, we came to the United States to help in a parish in south-east Washington, and then when I was 11 years old my family and I moved from Washington to Miami, Florida. The reason, why we moved from Italy to Washington and then from Washington to Miami, is that my family and I belong to the Neocatechumenal Way. The Neocatechumenal Way has been an integral part, not only of my life, but also of my

whole Christian formation. Regarding myself, I enjoy reading books, video games, listening to music, and walking in the mountains.

My entering into the seminary came very unexpected. up until I entered the seminary physically I never thought that I was actually going to enter one. I entered the Seminary when I was just 18 years old, fresh out of high school. The reason is that my last year in high school, I was feeling tired all the time, I felt heavy and didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. Sure I had a 29,000 thousand dollar scholarship to a 30 thousand dollar university, and was going to study what I had always wanted, aerospace engineering. I had a girlfriend, yet I felt like something was missing. That year around Easter I had asked my father if I could go somewhere for the summer alone so that I could rest. Once I graduated I went to visit a friend of the family that lived in Denver. The catch was that this friend of ours is the vice-Rector of the Redemptoris Mater house in Denver. So I went and spent three weeks in the seminary there and then went to participate to a retreat that was being given by the Neocatechumenal Way. At the end of the retreat, there was a call for all the men that went there that were thinking of entering the seminary, and I remember sitting there thinking that I would never get up. Yet, all of a sudden I found myself standing up with all of the men that were planning on entering the seminary. From there I went to the World Youth Day in Cologne, Germany where the Lord confirmed that this was his plan for me. Once there the Lord helped to do the impossible, that is take me, a stubborn, resilient young man with a set plan for his life and change everything upside down. Now I am studying something that I never thought that I would study, am living with people that I never thought I could live with, entering into a life that I know is impossible for me, yet I know that no matter what the Lord will not cheat me of anything.

Now I am finishing my fifth year in the seminary, much happier than I ever thought possible. While it is true that I have had problems, doubts & questions all of these years that I have been in the seminary, I see that the Lord is ever present, ever there. Also, every year the Lord has been re-confirming this vocation, I see that through small events, words that are given to me, the Lord reconfirms my vocation. This year, along with Cesar, I will be entering a time of missionary work, one that I am looking forward to, not just because it reminds me of what I have been doing my whole life, but also because I see the hand and the work of the Lord in my life and that he is slowly leading me to true happiness. This type of missionary work effectively involves being sent anywhere and with the ability of being changed at anytime.

Now, like Cesar, I'm at here at Immaculate Conception Parish until mid-July, learning what a parish is like, the kinds of duties, and work that needs to be done. I am enjoying this time very much and I hope that this will be a very fruitful experience. I ask you all for your prayers that no matter what I may always be willing to do the will of the Lord.



FILM FESTIVAL – SUMMER SMILES

Groundhog Day with Bill Murray – A Comedy about Reality - Wednesday, August 4th

The Loved One with Jonathan Winters – A Comedy about Death – Wednesday, August 11th

Liar Liar with Jim Carrey – A Comedy about Truth – Wednesday, August 18th

All Films are at 7:00 p.m. – Air conditioned space and High Definition – Free

ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

We have reached our goal of \$120,000 with a total pledge amount of \$121,988.51. Of 2,109 active members of the parish, we had 515 donors and \$91,561.92 has already been received. We wish to thank all those who have contributed so generously to the Annual Catholic Appeal.

MASS SCHEDULE

MONDAY – June 28th

7:00 a.m. John Sivak
9:00 a.m. Father’s Day Novena
12 Noon William F. Kelly (18th Anniv.)

TUESDAY – June 29th

7:00 a.m. Sylvestre Family
9:00 a.m. Father’s Day Novena
12 Noon Rose DeCamillis

WEDNESDAY - June 30th

7:00 a.m. Angela DiPietro
9:00 a.m. Barbara & William Cusanelli
12 Noon John J. Prager & Sean Brown

THURSDAY- July 1st

7:00 a.m. Benedetto Zito
9:00 a.m. Rev. Joseph Grisaitis
12 Noon Albina Fonovich

FRIDAY - July 2nd

7:00 a.m. Michael DePace
9:00 a.m. Malachy McGurran (Anniv.)
12 Noon Mary & Edward Casey

SATURDAY - July 3rd

7:00 a.m. Bleda Donagan
9:00 a.m. Mary Sivak
12 Noon Ellen & Patrick Egan
5:00 p.m. All those enrolled in the Purgatorial Society

SUNDAY - July 4th

7:00 a.m. Robert J. Fay
9:00 a.m. Living & Deceased Parishioners
10:30 a.m. Frank Battaglia
11:45 a.m. **Spanish-** Emilio de Jesus Rodriguez, Jr.
1:00 p.m. Kathryn & Lester Frank

Lower Church:

9:00 a.m. **Italian-** Vincenzo Carullo

THE BREAD AND WINE are donated this week in loving memory of Margherita & Bernardino Petruso requested by their grandchildren.

THE CANDLES ON THE ALTAR were donated last week and this week in loving memory of Margherita & Bernardino Petruso requested by their grandchildren.

THE SANCTUARY LAMP is burning this week in loving memory of Mary & William O’Connell requested by Rose Walsh.

PLEASE KEEP THEM IN YOUR PRAYERS



Please pray for the recently deceased:
Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine on them forever. +

COLLECTION

Week of: June 19th & 20th:

Total Collection: \$7,971.49
Attendance: 1,563
Per Capita: \$5.10

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Religious Education Office is now closed for the summer. It will reopen on September 7th. First Registration date will be September 12th. To all of our students and parents have a wonderful Summer!!! See you in September.

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2011

The Youth Group of our parish is beginning its year long fundraising to send teens and young adults to share in the worship and praise with our Holy Father. Next weekend members of the Youth Group and Squires will be handing out cans for you to take home and collect money for this cause throughout the summer. They will be collected the week of Sept. 11th through Sept. 19th. Thank you for your generosity.

SCHOOL NEWS

Congratulations to Immaculate Conception's Graduating Class of 2010. Their commencement was held on Saturday afternoon, June 19. We wish all our graduates good luck in their new high schools. Our prayers and love go with them.

We commend Lauren Martinez, the Valedictorian of the 2010 Class of Immaculate Conception. Lauren's average was 101.4! Our congratulations also to the Salutatorian, Monica Celaj, whose average was 99.6! We are proud of them and all of our graduates.

The Graduating Class of 2010 and their parents enjoyed a wonderful buffet dinner and dancing at Riccardo's by the Bridge on Sunday, June 13. Parents, faculty and staff also enjoyed the celebration. Thanks to everyone who arranged this festive gathering.

Congratulations to the Nursery, Pre K and Kindergarten classes of Immaculate Conception School. They celebrated the closing of their School Year with programs of song and recitation in the School Hall on Saturday, June 19th. Many thanks to their teachers Mrs. Christou, Mrs. Gomez, and Mrs. Regazzi. We are also grateful to their Aides, Mrs. Arroyo, Mrs. Leston and Mrs. Martin for all their hard work throughout the school year. Many volunteers also help give their time on a daily basis: Mrs. Sanchez, Mrs. Celaj and Mrs. Bianco. We are very proud of our Early Childhood Program.

The Fifth Grade miniature Veterinarian Clinic earned \$1,250! The proceeds will be given to Holy Union Sister Eileen Davey for her work with the children in Haiti. The winner of the raffle was sixth grader Alexis Velazquez.

The Faculty and Staff of Immaculate Conception School will celebrate the end of the school year with a luncheon at El Olivo. We hope everyone enjoys their summer break.

FUNDRAISER FOR MICHELLE SPELLMAN

LUPO

Riccardo's By the Bridge
Buffet Dinner/ DJ/ Raffles
Date: Saturday, July 10, 2010
Time: 1: PM to 5 PM
Location: 21-01 24th Avenue, Astoria
Tickets: \$40 for adults \$15 for children
Phone: (718)721-7777

Michelle Spellman Lupo is an alum from Immaculate Conception School and parish who is currently battling cancer. This fundraiser will help to offset the medical bills her family is now incurring. Michelle is a mother of three children.

AUTUMN AUCTION

The Immaculate Conception School Alumni Association is happy to announce that it is hosting an Autumn Auction to benefit our students and school on Sunday, October 10, 2010 at Riccardo's by the Bridge from 1-5pm. A buffet dinner, beer, wine, soda and dessert will be served. Tickets cost \$45.00 per person and are available in the school office or the rectory. Bring your family and friends. Volunteers for the event are also needed. For more information call Committee Chairperson: Ms. Frances Rocco at 917-482-6124.

Autumn Auction Committee members are already at working securing and collecting donations from our business neighbors and hope to have an extensive array of 200 gifts, baskets and certificates. Chances will be sold the day of the auction and these prizes raffled away. If you would like to donate an item or basket, please contact : kprager@stjohnsprepschool.org

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SCHOOL REGISTRATION

Registrations for the 2010-2011 School Year at Immaculate Conception School will be taken up until June 30th. Please come to register Mondays through Fridays from 9AM until 11 AM. If these hours are not suitable for you, please call the school office at 718-728-1969 to arrange a more convenient time. We look forward to meeting with you and providing your child with the best of Catholic Education.

ST. GIANNA RESPECT LIFE

"All are welcome to attend the next St. Gianna Respect Life Committee meeting Wednesday, July 7th at 7:00 p.m. in the Rectory". The last two meetings for this year will take place on Wednesday, September 1st and Wednesday, November 3rd.

BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM

Have you ever started reading the Bible, only to put it down after a few weeks? Do you listen to the Scripture readings at Mass and wish you knew more about the story? Join us for an incredibly easy and fun way to read through the Bible. It's nothing like you've ever seen before!

The Great Adventure Bible Timeline Bible Study is your answer! Registration forms can be found in the back of the church, rectory, and our website.

SOCCER CAMP

A premier soccer camp for children ages 6-14 Featuring licensed coaching staff. Camp will start Monday, July 12th and end on Friday, July 16th, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Camp is limited to 50 children – First come/first served basis. Participating children will receive a free t-shirt. For more information please call 718-204-2444 – email: fiao@juno.com -- website: ItalianFederation.com.

FOUNDATION FOR MINISTRY PROGRAM

Are you thinking about volunteering for a parish ministry? Are you already in ministry or part of the Parish Pastoral Council, but need an update on the teachings of the Catholic Church? Perhaps the Pastoral Institute's **Foundations for Ministry Program** is for you! This 10 week program, designed for adult learners, covers a different topic each week. Classes begin in September and are being offered in English and Spanish in the Parish Center at Mount Carmel. If you are interested call Nelsa Elias at the Pastoral Institute at 718-229-8001 ext. 350 for more information.