MAY 5, 2019-THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST CHURCH
103 Savanna Road • Hanover IL 61041

The mission of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church is to provide a place of Catholic worship, sacraments, spiritual guidance, education, love and support of all ages throughout our parish and community.

Parish Mission Statement

"Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.'" Peter is a favorite apostle for many people. I wonder if it is because of his flawed, relatable humanity. Today’s Gospel takes place after Jesus appears to the disciples and breathes the Holy Spirit upon them. And yet, Peter finds himself returning to his old way of life, to comfortable habits he formed long before following Jesus. Is something still lingering in him? Is something still lingering in us? Lent is over, and we should be rejoicing! But do you feel like you’re still holding onto something? Or perhaps you had an excellent Lent. You encountered Jesus in a new way and grew in faith. But as the weeks since Easter have slipped by, some of your newfound devotion has begun to waver. The closeness you felt in your Lenten commitments has given way to humdrum status quo or turn-of-the-season busyness.

"'Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter has endured so much in his walk of discipleship! But something is still weighing on him. In today’s Gospel, Jesus confirms Peter’s devotion three times, a redemption of his earlier three-fold denial. The call of the Lord must come again, as if heard anew for the first time. So often, this is the pattern of the Christian life. We discover God and experience a new desire for our faith, but in time, our enthusiasm begins to wane. Perhaps something happens that startles us, or we startle ourselves by a poor decision. Then we discover God anew! Our joy returns...for a while. Even the Apostles were no strangers to the cyclical nature of spiritual growth. Our disappointments or frustrations should not be cause for giving up. Like Peter, we too can recommit and start anew. This Sunday and every day of our lives, Jesus is waiting to say again, “Follow me.”

3RD SUNDAY OF EASTER

[Jesus] said to him, “Follow me.” - Jn 21:19b

Dear Friends in Christ,

“We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). “We are witnesses of these things, as is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him” (Acts 5:32).

Our society extols individual rights, freedom, and power. Questioning authority is something all Americans can relate to. After all, our nation began in revolt against abuses of authority of the English king and parliament. However, human pride and selfishness can also lead us to reject even legitimate exercises of authority, especially when those would require some sacrifice on our part. In light of all this, the word and concept of obedience are unpopular.

We tend to feel that obedience involves submission to coercive force which requires us to act a certain way, whether we want to or not, or else we will be punished. Yet the word “obedience” comes from the Latin word which means “to listen.” A child trying to be good listens to his or her parents, trusts them, and wants to cooperate with their wishes even when the child does not fully understand why the parents are telling the child to do something. This is an apt illustration of the kind of obedience we all should have towards God. God loves us, sustains our life, is infinitely knowledgeable and wise, and so is worthy of our total attention, trust, love, and obedience. Yet God does not expect or want us to be like robots, obeying blindly, without thinking or feeling. God wants us to use our mind and ask good questions that help us better understand God’s will, so that we can do it with as much understanding and love as we can have under the circumstances. When we obey God we are given the Holy Spirit, God’s love in person, to live and love with God’s life and love. Only then can we hope to properly distinguish between demands of human authorities that we should obey and those we should not.

This weekend we kick off our 2019 Diocesan Appeal with a second collection at all Masses. If you were unable to pledge or donate this weekend, please use the envelope you received in the mail or one you can find in the vestibule of the church to make a pledge or donation. The envelope should show your parish, so that your parish can receive credit for your donation, as each parish is assigned a target by the diocese. Thank you for your generosity!

In Christ,
Fr. Dennis
HELP PREGNANT SINGLE MOTHERS

Make it easier for them to choose life!!!!!! Leave new or slightly used items for babies and young children in the cradle located in the vestibule. Cash donations accepted too. Place money in an envelope marked Knights of Columbus in the Sunday collection.

On May 11th & 12th, your Knights of Columbus ask our Mothers to register so that a rosary may be said in their Honor by a Knight. You may sign up before or after the Masses on Saturday and Sunday. A momento will be given.