

Padre' Jerry's Message of faith, and encouragement...

God has a plan for our troubled time and our troubled country. I know it doesn't always seem like that. I know his ways can seem confusing, mysterious, and even frustrating. But, just the same, I know God is at work right now. And if we look for him, we will find him.

Few embraced the dignity of suffering as strikingly as Pope Saint John Paul II, who endured it throughout his life. In 1995, he stated in *Evangelium vitae* (no. 67),

Living to the Lord . . . means recognizing that suffering, while still an evil and a trial in itself, can always become a source of good. It becomes such if it is experienced for love and with love through sharing, by God's gracious gift and one's own personal and free choice, in the suffering of Christ Crucified. In this way, the person who lives his suffering in the Lord grows more fully conformed to him (Phil 3:10; 1 Pet 2:21).

As he did on Calvary, Jesus stands in the midst of it all... the uncertainty, frustration, loneliness, fear, anger, poverty, and grief. He stands there and asks us to join our suffering to his so that he can use it to redeem the world. He also invites each of us to look for new ways to use this time to grow closer to him. I know we have time, lots of time we just have to strive to use it to our best. No matter how much unrest rages around us, our faith remains the most urgent task of our lives.

Even in our troubled times we are called to live in holiness. God's call to holiness... to sainthood... doesn't change when the world falls apart. In fact, it grows even more urgent. I'm trying to answer that call by deepening my prayer life... and helping you deepen your prayer life, living our vocations as a priest, husband, wife, son or daughter and with greater intensity. As parents you realize your child's faith is a faith that is lived, practiced, and learned, making an exception to that is making an exception to God.

We have been striving here at Immaculate Conception to find new ways to help each Catholic person and each Catholic family know their faith, even when many of us can't gather together in person. I want to share with you some of the exciting things we're doing to help lead everyone to greater knowledge and love of the faith.

Communications is first and foremost. Look for everyday exciting and faith building messages on our new sign. ***Building Strong Catholic Families... Building Strong Catholic Faith*** is not just our parish mission statement it is first and foremost part of our everyday life. We are a parish that is composed of individuals and families that strive to make this happen. I want to encourage, engage, and lead by prayerful example.

Our TV Mass has been a blessing to our elderly who want so much to be present for Mass each Sunday but can't. Soon Mass and other events will be coming live not only on TV but also through Facebook: Using technology to grow in our faith. Sometime in October we hope to do a final session on the Book of Revelation to finish what we started last year. The session will be aired on TV as well as Facebook; stay-tuned. Yes, those who wish to borrow the DVD's to see them in their own home may do so.

FORMED.org... the Catholic Faith on demand will be growing stronger within our parish. Diving into the beauty of the faith has never been easier; at home, on the go, or from any internet connected device. We were truly blessed last year to bring this to all our parishioners and we have been blessed to now provide two more years at no charge to each parishioner, young or old.

There is a beautiful theme of a movie that I once saw that comes to meaning... PAY IT FORWARD! Our faith is just that... we Pay It Forward... we pass it on.

Next month is Respect for Life month, last year we did a fund raiser and listened to great speakers who came to share the important message that all of us hold so deeply to our hearts... **all life matters**, especially those who can't speak up. We will soon be having an outdoor Holy Hour, it is scheduled for October 11th. at 7:30 with prayers, rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet for an end to all abortions. Mark your calendar it will be at the gazbo, please bring lawn chairs.

Speaking of outdoors, on October 3rd. Saturday night at 4:00 of our October-Fest Parish festival the **Mass will be outdoors** at the gazbo with lively Poka-German music, as an addition. More people can gather to enjoy the Mass, even in their own cars, it will end with a limited social time afterwards for those who wish, please bring the comfort of your own lawn-chairs.

We have begun our experimental first year of our revised new educational program for our students in grades K-12. Please pray for its success as we strive to assist our parents in the education of their children. Sherrie, along with our staff, over 24 volunteers, and guidance from the health department have been working tirelessly to bring our parish center and teachers up-to-date and ready in the task God has blessed them with. Yes, he truly has blessed them and you should be very thankful for them.

A couple of years ago, we had adopted our parish mission statement... Building Strong Catholic Families, it has been a corner stone of our parish for a couple years now and one of the goals of Renee and the committee was to bring strong Catholic speakers and guest to our parish. Even though we have had speakers and a big diocese wide youth conference scheduled for this Fall, which fell through as a result of uncontrolled circumstances. The youth conference was to have been a fun day of contest, prayer, music, and theology lessons with faith and morals. We had expectations of hundreds of youth participates. Then this November we had plans for Fr. Joseph Morris as a guest for a presentation in a theatrical way on the Gospel of Matthew. It was to begin with Mass followed by his presentation in a dinner theater atmosphere. Plans were in the works and now are just put on hold for next year. Even though... our mission doesn't change... bringing and building faith within all our families. God Bless You!

Our Mission Statement

Our parish is composed of people like me

Who strive to make it what it is.

*I want to always be encouraging and
to engage others to be a faithful Dynamic Catholic.*

I will lead by my prayerful example

So as to help make my parish more prayerful.

In my worship, I will encourage others to worship.

In my giving, I will be an example of sharing.

In being a parish of loyalty and love,

Of fearlessness and faith,

of compassion, charity, and mercy

I will continue to encourage our mission of:

Building Strong Catholic Families... Building Strong Youth and Strong Catholic Faith!