

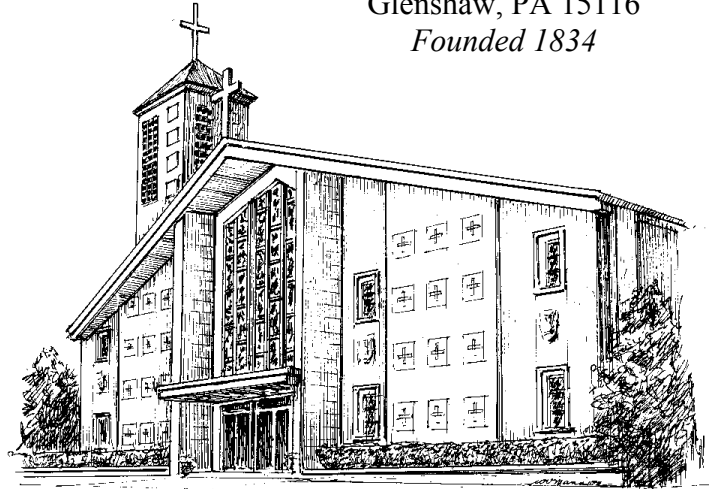
# PARISH FAMILY OF ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time  
August 23, 2009

2510 Middle Road  
Glenshaw, PA 15116  
Founded 1834

## PARISH STAFF

Mrs. Barbara Belski, Dir. of Youth Ministries  
Mr. Francis Dadowski, Deacon  
Mr. James Finn, Pastoral Associate  
Mr. Robert Fleckenstein, Transitional Deacon  
Mr. Robert Kardasz, Dir. of Music Ministries  
Father John Marcucci, Pastor  
Ms. Antoinette Pilarski, Principal  
Father Edward Schleicher, Parochial Vicar  
Sr. Lois Spinnenweber, CDP, Apostolate Minister  
Miss Rose Stegman, Dir. of Faith Formation



Web Site: [stmaryglenshaw.org](http://stmaryglenshaw.org)

E-Mail: [rectory@stmaryglenshaw.org](mailto:rectory@stmaryglenshaw.org)

Parish Family Administration Office: 412-486-4100

Religious Formation Office - 412-486-5521

Youth Ministry Office - 412-492-9344

Social Ministry Office - 412-486-4021

Parochial School - 412-486-7611

Marian Hall - 412-684-1112

Fax: 412-486-4150



## SUNDAY LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday at 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.  
Sunday at 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

## DAILY LITURGY SCHEDULE

Monday through Friday at 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.  
Saturday at 8:00 a.m.

## RECONCILIATION

Saturday at 11:00 a.m. until final penitent is finished

## BAPTISM

On Sunday twice a month after parental interview

## ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Twice a year in a communal celebration  
Individually upon request

## MATRIMONY

Saturday weddings at 12:00 noon and 2:00 p.m.  
Notification at least 6 months in advance

## BULLETIN DEADLINE

Monday at 12:00 noon

## THE AUGUST PLACE TO BE

Once more the month of August became the "August Place To Be" in our Parish Family as we celebrated so many events that were open to all parishioners. We thank those who made our Feast Day celebration with the assembly procession to our outdoor Marian shrine such a memorable event. Added to this was the great number of people who took part in our Parish Family picnic with a special gratitude to all those who labored to make it such a wonderful experience for all. The Vacation Bible School that touched so many of our families was absolutely spectacular. Where else would one want to be in the month of August than in the Parish Family of *St. Mary of the Assumption!*

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOR ALL

We cannot overestimate the importance of the Catholic School not only as a unique value-filled educational process for the students who attend, but also as a great asset to our parish life. We welcome back for another inspirational school year all those who serve in our parochial school both as faculty and administration for their commitment to catholic education. We remind all parishioners that St. Mary Catholic School is open to all persons from the age of three to the eighth grade.

## ATTENTION BUSINESS OWNERS!

The Pennsylvania State Legislature passed a new addition to the Education Improvement Tax Credit program which permits C corporations, S corporations and now subchapter S businesses to give to our Catholic school from their tax bill. We ask all local businesses to consider this fabulous program which enables that business to help our parochial school. For information go to [newpa.com](http://newpa.com) or call Dr. Ron Bowes at 412-456-3090.

## PARISH USAGE OF THE "PAC"

With the many athletic and dramatic events of our parishioners, we need a full time schedule for the use the Parish Activity Center (PAC). We will have a "scheduling session" on Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup> beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the rectory for all those representing groups who might wish to use the PAC. We hope to create an overall Parish and School event schedule that will be agreed to by all present.

## LIKE TO PLAY A PART?????

We are in the final phase of casting the parts for our 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Original Musical for those who would "like to play a part" in the performance. This is the last week to sign up for a role in the play that is scheduled for October 17<sup>th</sup>. Please call the rectory if you are so interested. All those who wish to be part of this unique parish experience must be on the listing of Tom Politylo (director) or Bob Kardasz (music composer). If you have not been contacted by either of them, please contact one of them this week.

### COUNCIL GOAL FOR 2009 (part 13)

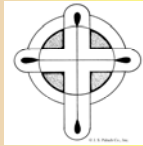
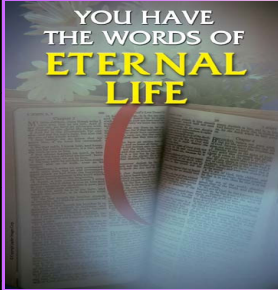
**G**rowing **I**n **F**aith **T**ogether --- **GIFT** --- the acrostic that the Pastoral Council has created to name each of the Twelve geographic areas of our Parish Family. The ten members of the Pastoral Council are now in the process of creating an Open Forum with invitations being sent to those who might offer leadership to their **GIFT**. This Open Forum is being set up for anyone who wishes to experience the work of the Council as it creates **GIFT** as the goal for 2009 with ramifications for many years to come! The date of the forum will be later on in September.

## NO SIGNS AT THE DRIVEWAY

We remind all those who wish to create a sign for their event or activity that we will no longer have signs on our property, especially near the entrance of the driveway. Many parishioners have complained about their "vision being blocked" as they exit or enter the driveway. We simply ask those who wish to advertise their event to call the rectory and their information will be placed on the "Tricolor Display Network" that has been beautifully mounted on our property. Other signs that are placed on our property will be removed and disposed of by our efficient Maintenance Department.

## MATCHING FUNDS GROWING

We thank those who have already made a pledge or donation to the Third Phase of our Pledge Campaign since this amount is then DOUBLED by our "Matching Fund Program." The CCC continues to reach out to others to help in this process. Our goal is to raise \$250,000 since that amount would be then matched by a very generous donor who wishes to remain anonymous.



## LITURGIES FOR THE WEEK

### Sunday, August 23, 2009 - Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

- 4:00 p.m. William Holder - Ann Newill
- 6:00 p.m. Living & Deceased of Our Parish Family
- 7:30 a.m. Frank Kuzma - Bob Betza
- 9:00 a.m. Ruth, James Jr., James Cray, Sr. - Antoinette & Robert Cray, Jr.
- 11:00 a.m. 40th Wedding Anniversary of Jerry & Fran Angelo

### Monday, August 24, 2009 - St. Bartholomew

- 7:00 a.m. John & Dorothy Glynn - Linda Hutchinson
- 10:00 a.m. Giacinto Derenzo - Elisabetta Derenzo

### Tuesday, August 25, 2009 - St. Louis of France & St. Joseph Calasanz

- 7:00 a.m. Taylor, Nicholas & Robert Korbe - Grandma & Mom
- 10:00 a.m. Pamela Antico - Sister

### Wednesday, August 26, 2009 - Weekday in Ordinary Time

- 7:00 a.m. Vincenza Derenzo - Husband, Giuseppe
- 10:00 a.m. Joan Marmarosa - Bill & Sue Ebel

### Thursday, August 27, 2009 - St. Monica

- 7:00 a.m. Fredrick Rihn - Family
- 10:00 a.m. Richard Goral - Tom & Kathy

### Friday, August 28, 2009 - St. Augustine

- 7:00 a.m. John Angelo - Jerry & Fran Angelo
- 10:00 a.m. Joseph Hvostal - Rege & children

### Saturday, August 29, 2009 - The Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist

- 8:00 a.m. Mary E. O'Connor - Rita Ritzmann
- 4:00 p.m. Mr. Leo Adams - Steve & Mike Adams Family
- 6:00 p.m. William Deasy - Lou & Veronica

### Sunday, August 30, 2009 - Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

- 7:30 a.m. Living & Deceased of Our Parish Family
- 9:00 a.m. Charles Stepnick, Jr. - Dan & Shirley Stepnick
- 11:00 a.m. Edward Bittner - Family

## Weekly Activities at a Glance

- Sunday August 23** (Marian Hall) 8:00AM - Blood Drive **TODAY!!**
- Monday August 24** (Marian Hall) 7:30PM - 175th Anniversary Play Practice
- Wednesday August 26** (Marian Hall) 1:30PM - 55 Specials Bingo  
(Marian Hall) 6:00PM - Grade 2 - Rite of Preparation  
(Marian Hall) 7:00PM - Grade 8 - Rite of Preparation
- Thursday August 27** (Marian Hall) 6:00PM - Knights of Columbus Meeting
- Friday August 28** (Marian Hall) 7:30PM - 175th Anniversary Play Practice
- Sunday August 30** (Marian Hall) 9:00 & 11:00AM - Liturgy of the Word for Children  
(Marian Hall) 10:00AM - Grade 8 - Rite of Preparation  
(Marian Hall) 12:00PM - Grade 2 - Rite of Preparation



Flowers adorning our sanctuary are in celebration of Gregory and Leigh Edleman's wedding.

### A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE by Bud Ozar

Jesus puts all the cards on the table in today's gospel and "many walked away" because they found it too "hard." Are you committed to the relationships in your family as they really ARE or to the mental fantasy of how YOU WANT THEM to be?

## BANNS OF MARRIAGE

I. Michael Biskup (St. Mary) & Emily May (Assembly of God)

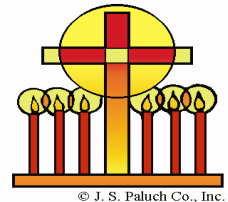
## At Home with the Lord

Remember Lord and welcome into your Kingdom those who have died and have gone before us marked in the sign of faith, especially Richard C. Boucek, Elfrieda Sauer, mother of Linda Gatto, and Irwin Grunebach, father of Father Paul.

### Offertory Collection

August 16, 2009	Envelopes	Contributions
Offertory	788	\$17,440.00
Cash/Loose Checks	-	\$688.00
Children's Offertory	27	\$28.63
Assumption	113	\$1,762.00
School Collection	10	\$185.00
Mission Sunday	2	\$270.00
Parish Share 2009	5	\$145.00
Parish Needy	33	\$554.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>\$21,073.49</b>

## Daily Readings



- August 24: Rv 21:9b-14; Jn 1:45-51
- August 25: 1 Thes 2:1-8; Mt 23:23-26
- August 26: 1 Thes 2:9-13; Mt 23:27-32
- August 27: 1 Thes 3:7-13; Mt 24:42-51
- August 28: 1 Thes 4:1-8; Mt 25:P1-13
- August 29: 1 Thes 4:9-11; Mk 6:17-29
- August 30: Dt 4:1-2, 6-8; Jas 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27; Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

## SACRAMENTAL LIFE

### A VOCATION VIEW

*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Choose to follow and serve God with your whole life.*

(John 6:60-69)

### R.C.I.A.

Helping others find faith and a home in a faith community is one tremendous way we can help heal our world. Many are searching for belief and have no church to help or guide them. Others are looking for a church whose values they want to live. Still others were baptized into our faith community, then for one reason or another, never moved on in this faith community and did not receive the other sacraments of initiation (Holy Eucharist and Confirmation) There are so many who fall into one of the above categories. **YOU** can help bring them satisfaction in their lives and healing that is found only in Jesus. **YOU** can invite them to “**come and see**” what our Catholic faith community is all about. The **RCIA** team at St. Mary’s is anxious to welcome you. There is no financial cost and the persons are free to continue or to exit the program any time they want. Live your call to be evangelists. **Invite someone to seek answers to their faith questions in the RCIA.** Call Father Ed or Jim Finn at the rectory 412.486.4100 to find out more.

### WORSHIP COMMISSION MEETING

will be held on Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, at 7:00 P. M. in the rectory. Submit agenda items to Tom Goral, chairperson at 412.487.6244.

### MARRIAGE MOMENT

Is your marriage going well? Great! Maybe it’s time to give back. Consider passing on your hard earned wisdom as a mentor to engaged couples or taking leadership in a marriage enrichment program. If you are blessed, you have responsibilities.

### MARRIED COUPLES RETREAT

Join Father Scott Seethaler, OFMCap. at the Paul VI Pastoral Center in nearby Wheeling, West Virginia for a retreat for married couples entitled, A FUTURE FULL OF HOPE. The weekend begins on Friday, October 2 and ends at noon on Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. Call 304.277.3300 to make a reservation to obtain more information.

### STRESS IN YOUR MARRIAGE?

Retrouvaille is a program for married couples that feel bored, disillusioned, frustrated, or angry in their marriage. Some experience coldness. Others experience conflict in their relationship. Most don’t know how to handle these situations. This program has helped 10’s of 1000’s of couples experiencing difficulties in their marriage. For confidential information about or to register for the upcoming program that will begin on September 25th though the 27th, please contact 412.277.3434. More information is available at [www.helpourmarriage.com](http://www.helpourmarriage.com)

### PARENTING POINTERS

Memory making sometimes means sharing one of your own childhood memories with your son or daughter. Think of a funny, sad, or meaningful experience (or even a mistake from your childhood) and entrust it to your child. It doesn’t cost anything but it can bring you closer together.

## RELIGIOUS FORMATION

### Faith Sharing for 21st Week of Ordinary Time

Some of Jesus’ followers found his teaching about “eating his flesh and drinking his blood” difficult to believe and understand. Christian disciples today face other challenges in our society and our world. What challenge do you face which for many in our culture seems “too difficult to follow?” What gifts does God give you to help you live faithfully to Him and His Word?

**Grade 2 Families meet** at ONE of these times in Marian Hall for the Rite of Preparation at which your child will receive the book to be used in the cluster and class sessions in preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Meet on **Wednesday, August 26, at 6:00 PM**, or **Sunday, August 30, at Noon**, or **Thursday, September 3, at 4:00 or 6:00 PM.**



**Grade 8 youth and parent/guardian** meet at one of these times in Marian Hall for the first session to *Journey with the Spirit* as cluster groups.

**Wednesday, August 26, 7:00 PM**, or **Sunday, August 30, 10:00 AM**, or **Thursday, September 3, 7:00 PM.**

Deacon Fran and catechists will facilitate the session and invite youth to take some leadership roles.

Our **Parish Faith Formation Office** IS open, 8:30 AM till 4:30 PM or make contact at [ccdoffice@stmaryglenshaw.org](mailto:ccdoffice@stmaryglenshaw.org) or 412-486-5521.

**MIDDLE SCHOOLERS** – Grades 6-7-8 and parents of these youth...YOUR suggestions needed for how our team can best support you. Send YOUR ideas and comments to [ccdoffice@stmaryglenshaw.org](mailto:ccdoffice@stmaryglenshaw.org) with subject: **Middle Youth with Burning Hearts !**

Registrations for our 2009 – 2010 Catechetical Season for families of Children/Youth who attend PUBLIC SCHOOLS, are being taken at our Faith Formation office, 412-486-5521 or [ccdoffice@stmaryglenshaw.org](mailto:ccdoffice@stmaryglenshaw.org)

Choose the best time/day for your family involvement:

**Mondays 4:30-6:00 PM or 6:30 till 8:00 PM**,  
**Saturdays 10:30 AM till Noon**, or  
**Family Program one Sunday(3rd) a month, 9 AM till Noon.**

**Our parish PRO-LIFE group** meets each Saturday 7:30 AM to pray the rosary, participate at 8 AM Liturgy, then some go to pray and witness near the abortion clinic in Pittsburgh. **Any parishioner is welcome** to join with any aspect of this effort to save the most vulnerable.

### SUMMER BIBLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

There will be an evaluation and planning meeting on Thursday, August 27th at 7:00PM in Marian Hall’s Choir Room.

# YOUTH MINISTRY ALIVE AGAIN!

DON'T MISS THE NEXT BIG DIOCESAN  
EVENT

on Saturday, September 12  
from 2 – 10 PM

ST. Benedict the Abbot

**Cost \$15**

- Liturgy with Bishop Zubik
- Our own Deacon Rob is going
- Outdoor concert [bring blanket]
- Cool seminarians and great speakers.
- Youth from around the diocese
- Food and free stuff!
- Will count as part of requirement to play CYM basketball, participate in drama or our annual mission trip.

**Mrs. B needs that money and a signed consent form ASAP!**

**MATTHEW 5: 3-12**

## VOLUNTEERS FOR SEPTEMBER HOMELESS SHELTER MEAL.

We will be looking for volunteers for the Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup> meal for the ladies at the SOAR shelter. Betty Hengelsberg has signed on to serve. We need a main course, a salad, bread, drinks [e.g. fruit juice or pop], and dessert; enough to serve 18 women. The ladies also really appreciate deli meats and cheeses to make lunches.

### PARENTS AND ADULTS

WE NEED SOME NEW PARENT OR ADULT VOLUNTEERS TO HELP US WITH OPEN GYM. **MOSTLY, WE NEED AN ADULT PRESENCE.** IT'S FUN, YOU CAN GET GREAT EXERCISE AND YOUR TEENS WILL BE IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT. OR, YOU CAN JUST SIT AND RELAX WHILE THE TEENS PLAY. PLEASE CONTACT BARB BELSKI VIA EMAIL [SEE BELOW] IF YOU ARE ABLE TO HELP OR CALL THE CYM OFFICE. YOU WILL NEED TO MEET DIOCESAN GUIDELINES ESTABLISHED FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR TEENS.

**CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK** at St. Mary of the Assumption CYM. Call the CYM line for current information on social, spiritual, and service activities for teens and young adults at 412.492.9344 or 412.486.4100, ex: 409 or contact Mrs. B at belskib@verizon.com.

## ST. MARY

**SCHOOL OPENS** - The doors of St. Mary School will reopen on Monday, August 31st, 2009, for all students. We are happy to have the halls humming once again with the children and teachers.



**NEW COMPUTER LAB** - With funding provided by the PTG, our school has a new computer lab outfitted with 24 brand new computers. The children will be amazed at the new look. Special thanks to the PTG and our Technology Committee who worked so hard to make this lab a reality.

**ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS** - Entertainment Books will be sold at the Scrip Office and at the Scrip table in church beginning this weekend. The cost of the book is \$20. We appreciate your continued support of our fundraisers.



### *Passport to Fashion*

St. Mary PTG is sponsoring a fashion show and luncheon on October 24, 2009, at noon at the Wildwood Country Club. Lunch consists of salad, a choice of chicken or fish, vegetable and dessert. Chicken nuggets with french fries are available for children. Adult tickets are \$25; children tickets are \$20. A Basket Auction, 50/50 raffle, and bake sale are some of the featured events. If you would like to join us for an afternoon of fashion and entertainment, please call Brenda Acri at 412-782-0306 for reservations.

**CONTINUE TO SAVE** - Please continue to save all Campbell's products labels, Box Tops For Education labels, ink cartridges, cell phones, and Shop 'N Save receipts for the school. These items afford us the opportunity to purchase educational materials for the children. Many thanks!

## 175<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY HAPPENINGS



- ♦ One of the highlights of this year's **MINISTRIES FAIR Sept. 12-13** is a display of memorabilia from the past. 175 years is a long time and we are celebrating our presence! Come be part of the legacy!
- ♦ **Mark your calendars:**
- ♦ **Sun.-Wed. Oct. 11-14**- Parish Mission Renewal.
- ♦ **Sat. October 17**- Historical Musical in the PAC at 7:30pm.
- ♦ **Sat. November 14**- Anniversary Dinner Dance at the Holiday Inn in RIDC Park beginning at 6:00pm. Make your reservation/s today!
- ♦ **Tues. December 8**- Solemn Closing Mass with Bishop Zubik at 7:00 P. M.

## OUR PARISH NEWS

### *A Thought from Deacon Rob*

"... It is us together - all of us remembering what we have heard together - that creates the whole story, the long story of the people." I found this quote of storyteller Leslie Marmon Silko in the Rockwell Museum of Western Art in Corning, New York, on a recent trip. It made me begin to think and reflect upon how we are each a part of each other's stories. Though I have only been here a short time, the 175 year history of this parish has become a part of me, as I have become a part of it. As members of this parish family, we all play a role in the story of this parish, and this parish family plays a role in each of our personal stories.

This Sunday begins my final week here for my summer pastoral assignment. Next weekend I report back to Saint Vincent Seminary to begin my final year of studies in preparation for my ordination to the priesthood (God willing) next June. I am grateful for having been assigned here, and look forward to returning here from Latrobe on the weekends during this upcoming academic year.

This parish, its long history, and you, its members, have become part of my story, which is still being written. I pray that my being here, as short as it has been so far, has made an impact on your personal story - whether it has been through a conversation or activity or as simple as listening to one of my homilies at Mass. On the whole, however, each of our stories are rooted in the practice of our Faith, given to us at our Baptism, and renewed each week at the Eucharistic feast. As members of the Body of Christ, we share in the story and life of Jesus Christ - a story that is still being written. As we prepare to close another summer chapter in our own life-story, may we always remember that we are part of a greater story, a story which God continues to write daily in our world. And though the Holy Spirit, may we remember that "it is us together" in which the Gospel is carried to a world that is in desperate need of its healing presence.

**MARKET DAY** ... NEW Order forms for September 21st are available at the church exits, the Faith Formation Office, and our School Scrip office. **BACK TO SCHOOL** lunches and snacks made easier with Market Day foods.

### Special Days this week:

#### **Monday, August 24**

Saint Bartholomew, apostle who gave his life spreading the good news of Jesus' love.

#### **Thursday, August 27**

Saint Monica, model of persistence in prayer. Her love moved her to storm heaven for her son and she did not give up until the prayer was answered.

#### **Friday, August 28**

Saint Augustine, doctor of Grace, who came to realize that his "heart is restless until it rests in God".

#### **Saturday, August 29**

The Martyrdom of John the Baptist; this cousin of Jesus died at the request of a jealous woman. A day to pray for cousins, and misguided man and women.

**GOOD  
NEWS  
TO  
SHARE**



**ADULTS & TEENS**, SEE the Source Books on display in the foyer and come for an opportunity for ENRICHMENT with Father John: He will lead us through an introduction to the newest Scripture Source Book and Catholic Source Book. Both texts will be available for purchase or loan at the session on Thursday, Sept. 17, 6:30-9:30 PM. Call 412-486-5521 to register.

### **PARISH MINISTRIES FAIR**

#### **SET FOR THE WEEKEND OF SEPTEMBER 12-13**

In conjunction with Hospitality Weekend all members of our parish family are invited to visit Marian Hall following the weekend Masses to see why St. Mary's is something special. Heads of our parish ministries and organizations will be on hand to explain their ministries. **MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND COME AND SEE!**

#### **RETREAT NEWS**

Our parish women will be going to St. Paul's Retreat Center November 6-7-8. All women are welcome! Call Irene Sins at 412.487.1779, Elma Plietz at 412.486-3508 or Patricia Rafferty at 724.443.6885 for more information.

#### **ADULT ENRICHMENT**

Desperate for the Word? Bible Study resumes on Tuesday, September 8, 2009, from 1:00-2:30PM in the Faith Formation Office. We will be studying the Psalms. **All are welcome!** Please contact Dori Monahan at 412.492.9891 with any questions.

#### **CARING FOR CAREGIVERS**

A day of refreshment for family caregivers, Monday, Sept. 14, 8:30AM till 3:00PM at Paul VI Pastoral Center, Wheeling, WV. Call Father David Nestler, at 304-277-3300 or e-mail [info@paulvi.org](mailto:info@paulvi.org).

**G-20 Summit coming to Pittsburgh** ... spend some time in prayer that international leaders will listen to God's will and not their own self interest. Pray that contraception and abortion will not be used as public policy for population control. Pray for an end to all violence. Our church is open every day, so come before the Blessed Sacrament to intercede for our world.

#### **CYM Basketball**

There will be opportunities for service hours for all teens wishing to play on the CYM basketball team this year, including working at our monthly parish breakfasts. Other service options include [but are not limited to] working as an aide in K - 8 Faith Formation, serving in any liturgical ministries at the parish or helping with other "Beatitude oriented" work. More information about upcoming service projects can be explored at Open Gym.

**BABY ITEMS NEEDED** at Genesis House. Pull-ups for newborns and sizes 1-2-3, T-shirts, sleepers, receiving blankets and bottles. Items may be placed in the box on the last pew in our church's Children Liturgy Room. Thank you in advance!

## As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Pastoral Impressions by Barbara Belski BSN, MA, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

*“Wealth can be an idol, built of gleaming gold,  
Bringing dreams of paradise, futures bought and sold.  
Some will choose to gather it, all that they can hoard,  
But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!”*

This is the first verse of a song written by Rory Cooney called “We will Serve the Lord.” It is based on our first reading for this Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary time from Joshua 24:15. God did not force Joshua and his people to love Him. God sought their free consent to renew the covenant – the Israelites and those they conquered were given a choice: **Serve God or serve the false gods?**

Ron and I had dinner with Fr. Vince Stegman at the All Saint’s parish festival last week and talked about my mission trip to Africa in 2008. I began to realize that I was talking to a man who knew how to get the most for his money. He has spent the last 34 years in Ethiopia. We talked airfare to Africa [expensive!], politics and corruption in the world, the plight of the poor no matter what country they inhabit, the incomparable taste of a papaya grown in Africa [delicious] compared to those we eat in the US [pretty bland], the incredible hope found in the poorest of the poor and the life changing experience that comes from serving God by serving others. And, Fr. Vince told me the most amazing fact about his work.

**\$120**

Our electric bill for one month

Half of what we spent one evening when we took our daughter and son-in-law out for dinner

About one third of what we spend each month on groceries

What I spent for a pair of hiking boots.

**The cost per day to feed 400 children in Ethiopia!**

Do you hoard your wealth, spending excessive amounts of money on food, clothing and entertainment?

What are your first thoughts when you wake up each morning?

How do I serve God?

Or, how do I best serve my own needs [AKA my false gods]?

This week we gave Fr. Vince a donation because we want to be able to say that for at least two days out of 365, he can feed his 400 children. Fr. Vince returns to Ethiopia tomorrow. Wouldn’t it be swell if we could send him off with enough money to feed the children all year? We have 2,400 families in our 175 year old parish; about 800 of them are fairly active, which means they come to church almost every weekend. If you multiply \$120 by 365 days and then divide by 800 that’s \$54.75 per active family to get Fr. Vince and his children through the next year. But, even better, he really just needs to feed the children for the nine months that they board with him while going to school. So, that becomes \$40.50 from each of our 800 active families. Wow, didn’t you just spend that at your local fast food joint?

Most of us cannot work in Africa; but that is not our calling. Fr. Vince, on the other hand, is responding to his personal call from God. And, he is doing one heck of a good job. But, he could really use some help. So, I am not sure what any of you are thinking, but “as for me and my house, we will [gladly] serve the Lord.” Thanks, Fr. Vince, and God be with you.