

PARISH FAMILY OF ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION

Seventh Sunday of Easter
May 24, 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 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

E-Mail: rectory@stmaryglenshaw.org

Parish Family Administration Office: 412-486-4100

Religious Formation Office - 412-486-5521

Parochial School - 412-486-7611

Youth Ministry Office - 412-492-9344

Marian Hall - 412-684-1112

Social Ministry Office - 412-486-4021

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

MEMORIAL DAY LITURGY

Please join us in honoring our military at the 10:00 a.m. liturgy on Memorial Day, Monday, May 25th as we begin the first of our summertime holidays. We request members of the military, whether active, reserve or veteran, to wear their uniform and join in the entrance procession. It is a fitting gesture to show support for our troops and pay homage to those defenders of freedom, who have gone before us. Being a citizen of the United States of America brings to us a dignity and pride that demands gratitude to our eternal God. We hope to use the occasion of these three days, Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day, to gather as ONE family to celebrate the mystery of our Catholic Faith. This becomes an appropriate time to gather at the altar in memory of those Americans who have given of themselves so that we can worship in freedom!

A "RED OUTFIT" DAY

Next Sunday is PENTECOST as we look forward to the coming of the Holy Spirit into our lives and into the Church. The fiery presence of the Spirit is emphasized by the RED vestments liturgically designated for the day. We encourage all those coming to the liturgy that day to wear "something red" in their outfit so that we can fill our entire sacred space with this color sign of the Holy Spirit who has given to each of us a life on fire with the presence of the divine in our hearts.

AFTERNOON PENTECOST CONCERT

In honor of the Solemnity of Pentecost, and in line with the "event of the month" to celebrate our 175th Anniversary, we invite all parishioners to join us at 1:00 p.m. NEXT SUNDAY for our "Live Concert." The festivities will begin immediately after the 11:00 a.m. liturgy with refreshments on the Pedestrian Plaza. Then all present will be treated to a wonderful display of musical talent as our Music Director Bob Kardasz brings out the best of the virtuosos of our Parish Family. This is a 175th anniversary event that one dare not miss!

**QUARTERLY MAILING
TO ALL REGISTERED HOMES
COMING OUT NEXT WEEK**

CONGRATULATIONS, SANDY!

Congratulations to Sandy Ondriezsek, one of the teachers in our excellent Catholic School, for being one of this year's recipients of the "Golden Apple Award." This is an honor bestowed by the Diocese of Pittsburgh to a very few elementary school teachers each year. The careful selection process is one in which each teacher is evaluated on professionalism, service to the Church and community, leadership qualities and essay. Sandy certainly fits this description in all its meaning. This is not only a wonderful recognition of her, but it speaks of the value-filled education that takes place in our parish school. The news report describing this award calls it "one of the finest of its kind in the entire country!" Congratulations, Sandy, we are all so proud of you and extremely honored that you serve in our Parish Family!

COUNCIL GOAL FOR 2009 (part 1)

All parishioners should be alert to the fact that the Pastoral Council is now working on the Parish Family Goal for 2009: to create "Twelve Geographic Areas" within the boundaries of our parish to deepen "participation and ownership" by all members. This goal has been summarized by the Council after extensive consideration of the results of the parish survey taken last year. We ask all parishioners to watch for the details of this process.

MAUSOLEUM BEING CONSIDERED

Members of the Cemetery Committee are in the process of considering the construction of an above ground mausoleum for our own cemetery. We remind those that might have an interest in this for themselves or their families to keep an eye on the action of the Committee so that all parishioners might have an opportunity to get the best buy of a presale. Details will be coming in the future.



FESTIVAL FLASHES

FESTIVAL DAYS: June 25-26-27 ...each family is asked to sell one book of tickets ... volunteers are needed for the booths ... the profit of this event goes directly to our "Contingency Fund" which this year will be use for the new roof on our school building.



LITURGIES FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, May 24, 2009 - Seventh Sunday of Easter

4:00 p.m. Bill Gallenz - M/M Bernie Wieszczyński
 6:00 p.m. Living & Deceased of Our Parish Family
 7:30 a.m. Vincent Londino - M/M Gregory Distilo
 9:00 a.m. Deceased of Hoffmann Family - Joe & Pat Hoffmann
 11:00 a.m. Ann & Bernard Churilla & Marvin - Irene, Elaine & Laverne

Monday, May 25, 2009 - St. Bede the Venerable, St. Gregory VII, St. Mary Magdalene de'Pazzi

10:00 a.m. Kenneth F. Palmer - Amelia Palmer

Tuesday, May 26, 2009 - St. Philip Neri

7:00 a.m. Helen Pike - Marie Hunkele
 10:00 a.m. Robert Steinsdoerfer - M/M Chris Klehm

Wednesday, May 27, 2009 - St. Augustine of Canterbury

7:00 a.m. Regis Murphy - Bob & Gloria Duffy
 10:00 a.m. Joan Marmarosa - Bill & Sue Ebel

Thursday, May 28, 2009 - Easter Weekday

7:00 a.m. Elli Linke - Joseph & Roseann Sullivan
 10:00 a.m. Mary Lou Blum - Virginia Spohn & Family

Friday, May 29, 2009 - Easter Weekday

7:00 a.m. Shirley Kornick - Family
 10:00 a.m. Helen Frejkowski - Kathy Ilkka

Saturday, May 30, 2009 - Vigil of Pentecost

8:00 a.m. Carol Hotopp - Tom & Dona Hotopp
 12:00 p.m. Wedding of Paul Byers & Mary Ellen Pampena
 2:00 p.m. Wedding of Michael L. Snelling & Linnea Merz
 4:00 p.m. Living & Deceased of Our Parish Family
 6:00 p.m. 40th Wedding Anniversary of Ron & Marie Deeds

Sunday, May 31, 2009 - Pentecost Sunda

7:30 a.m. Virginia Zottola - Cugliari Family
 9:00 a.m. Mary Louise Wagner - The Balestrino Family
 11:00 a.m. Elizabeth & Paul Imbarlina - Cathy Didomenico

Weekly Activities at a Glance

Sunday (Marian Hall) 10:00AM - Rite of Welcome for Gr. 7
 May 24 (Marian Hall) 11:00AM - Liturgy of the Word for Children

Monday Memorial Day
 May 25 No School

Tuesday (Church) 2:45PM - Children Cantor's Practice
 May 26 (Pantry) 6:00PM - Open Pantry
 (Rectory) 7:00PM - St. Vincent dePaul Meeting

Wednesday (Marian Hall) 1:30PM - 55 Specials - Bingo/Cards
 May 27 (Church) 2:45PM - Children's Choir Practice
 (PAC) 6:00PM - CYM Open Gym
 (Marian Hall) 6:30PM - Market Day Pick-up
 (Rectory) 7:00PM - Finance Council Meeting
 (Church) 7:30PM - Adult Choir Practice

Thursday (Church) 8:00PM - Adult Hand Bell Practice
 May 28

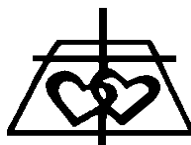
Friday (Church) 10:00AM - School Mass
 May 29 (Church) 1:30PM - St. Mary Kindergarten Graduation

Saturday (Marian Hall) Hospitality Weekend after all Liturgies
 May 30 (Marian Hall) 7:00PM - Decathlon - All Cluster Groups

Sunday (Plaza) Hospitality Weekend after all Liturgies
 May 31 (Church) 1:00PM - 175th Anniversary Concert

MEMORIAL DAY

O God, by whose mercy the faithful departed find rest, look kindly on your departed veterans who gave their lives in the service of their country. Grant that through the passion, death, and resurrection of your Son, they may share in joy of your heavenly kingdom and rejoice in you with your saints forever. We ask this through Christ our Lord.



BANNERS OF MARRIAGE

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- II. Stephen Galise (Ss. John & Paul) & Susan Schaltenbrand (St. Mary)
- III. Michael L. Snelling (St. Teresa) & Linnea Merz (St. Mary)
- III. Paul Byers () & Mary Ellen Pampena (St. Mary)

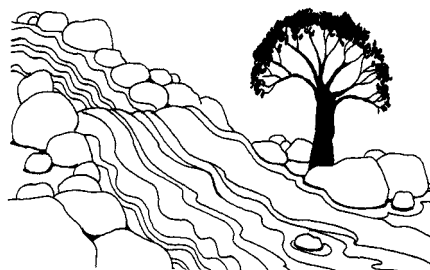


Due to vacation schedules, the contributions of May 17 & May 24th, will be posted in the bulletin on May 31st, 2008. Thank you for your consideration.

The Seventh Sunday of Easter May 24, 2009

WHOEVER BELIEVES
 AND IS BAPTIZED
 WILL BE SAVED

~Mark 16:16



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Daily Readings



May 25: Acts 19:1-8; Jn 16:29-33
 May 26: Acts 20: 17-27; Jn 17:1-11a
 May 27: Acts 20: 28-38; Jn 17:11b-19
 May 28: Acts 22:30; 23:5-11; Jn 17:20-26
 May 29: Acts 25:13b-21; Jn 21:15-19
 May 30: Acts 28:16-20, 30-31; Jn 21:20-25
 May 31: Vigil: Gn 11:1-9 or Ex 19:3-8a, 16-20b or Ez 37:1-14 or Jl 3:1-5; Rom 8:22-27; Jn 7:37-39
 Day: Acts 2:1-11; 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13 or Gal 5:16-25; Jn 20:19-23 or Jn 15:26-27; 16:12-15

SACRAMENTAL LIFE

TRAVELING VOCATION CHALICE

is available to be hosted by our parish families by calling Ron Ondrizek (412) 486-6851. Shut-ins and individuals are welcome to host. Members of the parish vocation council will deliver the chalice to your home if unable to get to church. Let us know.

A VOCATION VIEW

Jesus commissions us to go into the whole world and proclaim the good news. What do you need to carry out this mission? Ask for that grace. (Mark (16:15-20)

LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME MINISTRY

is a ministry to families with children age five and under. PRAY and PLAY DAY is held on the first and third Wednesday of the month at 9:30 A. M. All are welcome. For more information call Monica at (412)492-0242.

A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE by Bud Ozar

Before ascending to heaven, Jesus told us to “proclaim the gospel.” The great St. Francis of Assisi added to this when he said: “Preach always and sometimes, if necessary, use words.” We preach by how we live. What is the message preached by your family?

PARENTING POINTERS

How do you keep in touch with your child if you are away from home on business? When you can't physically hug or comfort your child, look for ways to be virtually present- a call at bedtime, a taped story, a Skype connection, a tweet here or there, an emailed photo of you holding a picture of your child. Be present even when you're not.

MARRIAGE MOMENTS

Resolving an argument:

Strategy # 4 CO-EXIST. When neither of you are willing to move from your position, it may be possible to simply agree to disagree. This way no one is wrong, but you agree to follow your own position as long as it doesn't interfere with your spouse. Next Week: CREATE A NEW SOLUTION.

FELLOWSHIP OF CATHOLIC MEN

All men and young men of our parish family are invited to make a reservation for the **OVERNIGHT CONFERENCE FOR CATHOLIC MEN**, 6pm, Friday May 29th through 5pm, Saturday May 30th at the Gilmary Center. Topic: “Discerning and responding to our personal vocation.” We will take a closer look at the bishop's Pastoral Letter, “The Church Alive.” Call Jim Finn (412)486-4100 if you are interested.

ANNIVERSARY TRIP SCHEDULED FOR JULY 18-19

Reservations are still available for the trip to Lancaster. On July 18th we will be in Lancaster to enjoy the musical stage production of “In the Beginning.” Then we will attend the Dinner Theatre production of “Singing in the Rain.” The next day, in Philadelphia, we will attend Mass at the National Shrine of St. John Neumann at St. Peter's Church. Following Mass we will tour the historic sights of Philadelphia. Cost for breakfast, dinner, accommodations, transportation, tickets, taxes and gratuities is \$283.00. Call Mary Ann 412.486.0165 or Arlene 412.487.1891 for details. Can be charged to your credit card. Great trip for families! Everyone welcome!

RELIGIOUS FORMATION

Faith Sharing for 7th Sunday of Easter & Ascension

The Church was born from the Words and good works of Jesus and the Apostles. Now the work of each individual member of the Church is important in carrying out its' evangelizing mission. In what ways do you show others God's love? What do you do as a member of the Church that evokes the desire for conversion to Jesus Christ in others?

Families of Children/Youth who attend PUBLIC SCHOOLS, if YOU need a copy of the Registration Form for our 2009 – 2010 Catechetical Season, contact our office at 412-486-5521 or ccdoffice@stmaryglenshaw.org

OUT TO THE BALLGAME...LAST CALL to attend the **Pirate's vs Huston Astro's Friday, May 29**. A few tickets may still be available @ \$9.00 per person. A carpool will leave St. Mary's at 5:45 PM. The game begins at 7:00 PM Contact our Faith Formation Office if interested.

MIDDLE SCHOOLERS –Grades 6-7-8 and parents/guardians, welcome to contact Mr. Ron Stone with YOUR ideas for monthly gatherings. Send inquiries to ccdoffice@stmaryglenshaw.org att: Mr. Ron

Grade 7 Youth and Parent/Guardian meet for a Rite of Enrollment as we look forward to the journey of CONFIRMATION as a disciple of the Lord Jesus. Meet in Marian Hall this Sunday, May 24, 10:00 AM

Newly Confirmed gathering for ALL clusters will be May 30 at the 6:00 PM Pentecost Eve Liturgy followed by refreshments and a DECATHALON: teams + ten games = ten TROPHIES to the Champions. Sign up lists for teams still being accepted at our Faith Formation office.

Summer Bible Program opportunities –Registration deadline for July and August programs will be at our Parish Festival.

- ◆ 4 evenings June 28-July 1, 6:30-8:30 PM - “Paul in Rome and the Underground Church”
- ◆ Tuesday evenings in July , 6:00-8:30 PM- “POWER ZONE” - summer sports camp!
- ◆ Son Rock Kids' Camp, Aug.10-14, 9:30 AM- Noon

REGISTRATION FORMS are available at the display board in our church foyer.

Diocesan Classes to be held in our St. Mary School:

Adults and High School Youth Welcome ! Catechetical Methods thru the Liturgical Year, with Master Catechists team, June 8-12, 9:00 AM till Noon; Mary, Teaching and Ministry, with Dr. Ed Scheid, June 15 thru 19, 9:00 AM till Noon. Call Marge at 412-486-5521 to pre-register by June 1.



LIFE

“Blessed is the mother who bore me and tenderly nursed me. Blessed is the growing embryo destined to be born this day.”

(from a Prayer for Life by Bro. Martin)

YOUTH MINISTRY MANDATORY

All teens and their families are **required** to consider May 23 – May 25 as a blessing from God and relax. Enjoy each other, pray together, take a hike and get refreshed. The next few weeks are going to fly!!

APPALACHIA MISSION NEWS

TWO MORE FUNDRAISERS – ON JUNE 6 & 21
PARENT MEETING – MANDATORY May 30 at 5 PM
OR May 31 at 10 AM in Marian Hall

We need parents and teens for our final two fundraisers, please bring your calendars to the meeting so that you may sign up to work. Pictures of our site for this summer's mission trip will be shown plus detailed information regarding final plans.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: Each year many public high schools offer a Baccalaureate, which is basically a prayer service run by the students; some occur at the high school while others are off-site, usually at a near by place of worship. If you are a high school senior, do you know about your public high school's Baccalaureate?

Hampton High School - Monday, June 8

Fox Chapel High School – Wednesday, June 10

Shaler – cancelled due to low attendance last year

CLASS OF 2009

BOTH HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL PARISH BACCALAUREATE

[We pray for our graduates in the context of a liturgy]

SUNDAY, JUNE 14

9 AM LITURGY

REPORT TO CHURCH AT 8:45 AM

BRING YOUR CAP & GOWN

OR ONE WILL BE PROVIDED

RECEPTION TO FOLLOW IN MARIAN HALL

Our parish celebrates your graduation with prayers and a breakfast reception. Even if you do not receive anything in the mail, you are definitely invited. PLEASE SAVE THE DATE – RSVP to the CYM office with the number of guests attending the breakfast [the graduate and two parents/guardians are not charged, all other guests pay \$3 per person]. Also, call in your information – the school you graduated from and what are your future plans i.e. school or a job.

YOUNG ADULT

OVER 21

Wine tasting and Wii

At the Catacomb

Friday, May 29 at 7 - 9 PM

Come and meet other young adults in a relaxed atmosphere of fellowship and games.

CYM WEEKLY CALENDAR

May 23 – 25	Mandatory family relaxation weekend
Wed., May 27	No Open Gym
Fri., May 29	Over 21 Young Adult - Catacomb
Sat. May 30	Mandatory parent meeting 5 PM
Sun., May 31	Mandatory parent meeting 10 AM

Call the CYM line for current information on our social, spiritual and service activities for teens and young adults at 412-492-9344 or 412-486-4100, extension 409 or email at belskib@verizon.net

ST. MARY

REGISTRATION FOR 2009-2010

DID YOU KNOW... that St. Mary School has a highly active PTG promoting a vibrant sirt of parental involvement, volunteerism, and cooperation.

...that St. Mary School has exceptionally caring, state-certified faculty and staff who regard their educational role as a ministry.

...that emphasis at St. Mary School is placed on respect for life, respect for the unique character of each student, a welcoming environment for living and learning within the Catholic faith to help our children realize their talents and become the individuals that God wishes them to be.

For more information about our school or to arrange a tour, please call the school office at (412) 486-7611. Come and see what we are all about!

FIRST PLACE: We are happy to announce that Matthew Wisneski, a sixth grade student who represented St. Mary School at the diocesan Spelling Bee, placed **FIRST** in the competition this past week. There were 68 diocesan schools represented at the Bee which was sponsored by the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Matthew received a \$100 savings bond and the school received a \$1000 gift certificate for supplies and materials.

TUITION DEADLINES: We hope that all those who have children in St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic School will meet the "tuition deadlines" that are set up during the year. It is imperative that we collect the tuition "on time" so that we can meet the payroll demands twice a month, and the other costs of maintaining the school as they arise. When we fail to meet the time demands of these costs, then we need to pay a "penalty" tax that simply increases the cost of the school in the long run. All families are reminded that their children may not participate in the summer programs of athletics for the school UNTIL they are "registered" for the coming year. REGISTRATION of the coming year includes completing the tuition payments of the previous year.



175th ANNIVERSARY HAPPENINGS

- ◆ **May 25** Memorial Day Mass at 10:00 A. M. with a remembrance of all veterans, especially those buried in our cemetery. The first burial in our parish cemetery took place in 1834, when the body of Mary Ann Bichler was interred. Our cemetery also holds the remains of the original landowner, Hugh Loughrey, who died in 1880, at the age of 100 years. He and Mary, his wife have a tombstone standing high above and adjacent to the walkway just outside of the west side entrances to our present church. In 1905, an additional eighteen acres were acquired for our parish cemetery.
- ◆ **May 30-31** Hospitality weekend to help us celebrate Pentecost Sunday.
- ◆ **May 31** Anniversary Concert on Pentecost Sunday at 1:00PM.

OUR PARISH NEWS

Festival Happenings

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you would like to volunteer at the festival for a few hours, please call ANNE ZEIS 412-487-7520. There are time slots open for the game booths, food booths, and flea market. Bring a friend and make a new friend while helping our festival be a success.

BASKET AUCTION

The Basket Auction Committee is now searching for donations and volunteers. In order for the Basket Auction to be successful we need your assistance. We invite you or anyone you know who would like to donate their time and/or talent to assist our committee with soliciting donations, setting up or the selling of tickets to contact: Judy Fritsch, 412.487.2368 or Kathy DiGirolamo, 412.486.0508. Please let us know if your ministry wants to donate. We will accept donations through June 5, 2009. Thereafter, will we only accept cash donations.

FLEA MARKET

New and used items needed in **GOOD and CLEAN** condition! NO clothing, magazines or gym equipment! Small items of furniture accepted! Spring cleaning? Your unwanted "valuables" can become someone else's treasures. Keep watching our bulletin for the drop off dates and times. **Items are NOT to be left unattended ANYWHERE on the Parish grounds.** Help is needed to sort and price our treasures! Please call Mary Ann Coholich at 412-486-0165, if you can help!

ST. MARY BAKERS

Once again it's time for all parishioners to share your "baked goodies" which will be enjoyed by all who attend the Festival Dinners and purchase them at the Bake Sale. Bake goods are needed for each dinner and the bake sale which will be held each night of the festival in Marian Hall. Please bring your desserts, pies, cakes, cookies to the church hall anytime after 1:30PM each day and label for dinner or for Bake Sale or double your recipe and make one for each! The following is a guideline if your name begins with

- A thru H - Thursday, June 25
- I thru P - Friday, June 26
- Q thru Z - Saturday, June 27

Thank you in advance for baking and donating a "double batch" of bake goods. God Bless the hands of our wonderful bakers!

CRAFT BOOTH

Thank you so much to all crafters who have donated wonderful homemade items to our booth year after year. We do appreciate your generosity and the craft booth as made a lot of money for the church as a result. We are again asking for all types of new craft items that we can sell at the festival. Please call Debbie Boyd at 724-449-5790 with questions for pick-up! Thank you!

GOOD NEWS TO SHARE



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PRAYER LIST

Please pray for all the sick and those recovering from illness. Family and friends have requested prayer for the following:



Richard Antoszewski, Rose Antoszewski, Frank, Mary Lou, Patricia A., Renae Vivaldi/Breskovich, Michael Breskovich, Thomas Bridge, Robert A. Deasy, III, Richard Eisman, Craig Glaser, John Hoehn, Luke Noullet, Josephine Piacentino, Sarah Polito, Paul Spadafora, Joshua Stanek, Jeff Stockert, Mark Thimons, Bill Vistein, Frank Vinski.



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On Sunday May 31, to celebrate Pentecost and St. Mary's 175th Anniversary, there will be a choral and instrumental concert at 1:00 PM featuring our adult choir and other members of our music ministry. There will be a period of refreshments and fellowship following the 11:00AM mass. Following this, the concert will start at 1:00PM. To reflect on the church's past traditions, music will be sung in German, English, Latin, Welsh and Gaelic.

The concert will feature the music of Mendelssohn, Mozart, Bach, Bruckner, Brahms and Rutter. In addition to the choir, there will be performances by vocal soloists, organ, and a woodwind trio. We hope to see everyone there as we continue to celebrate our 175th anniversary.

ANNIVERSARY MUSICAL HELP NEEDED

An original musical telling the history of our parish family is planned for Saturday, October 17 at 8:00 P. M. in the PAC. Help is needed to make this production happen! A variety of help is needed. Call Tom Politylo to find out where you can fit in. His number is 412.486.5030.

PICNIC FOODS - FREE HAMBURGERS at MARKET DAY

for orders over \$35 this month. Orders may be placed on line till Thursday, May 21 at marketday.com Market Day pick up will be WEDNESDAY, May 27, 5:30 PM due to the Monday, Memorial day holiday. Thanks to ALL patrons and helpers at our Market Day.

MISSION OUTREACH to help support needy students in Ethiopia under care of Fr. Vince Stegman. Raffle of 70 inch square colorful QUILT on May 31. Tickets \$1.00 each c/o Rose at our Faith Formation office.

Light Weigh

Are you tired of constantly struggling with your weight? Consider giving God a chance to touch your heart, your life and your eating. A Light Weigh orientation will be held at 7:30PM on Tuesday, May 26th at St. Victor Parish in Bairdford, downstairs in the church. Call Theresa for details at 724.265.4156.



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PASTORAL IMPRESSIONS from Father John

Memorial Day is Monday of this week and in the common parlance of many people "...it is the beginning of summer..." (even though the "official" date for the Summer Solstice is not until June 21st). With the coming of Memorial Day most children of school age begin to daydream about their summer vacation. Memorial Day is that day on the calendar when even working adults cannot wait until their responsibilities at work can be set aside for a few weeks so as to enjoy the coming of their well earned vacation days.

Memorial Day itself has its own way to be celebrated. Families begin to plan backyard picnics with invitations for neighbors and relatives alike to come and eat at the table of plenty. Local parks and swimming pools mark this date as their grand opening for another year of fun and frolic. Sports programs from the T-ball of the tots to the major league games of the professionals use this day to entice their fans to gather for grand give-a-ways and bonanzas. From coast to coast Americans tag Memorial Day as that moment each year when they leave their homes and move out into the sunshine for a taste of the good life.

Memorial Day, however, means so much more! Its origin lies somewhat in the aftermath of the Civil War when the custom of decorating the graves of the fallen soldiers began in earnest. By the end of World War I this day became a reminder of all those Americans who have given of their lives in the cause of freedom. Technically speaking, the United States observes no *national* holiday, since each State has jurisdiction over its own holidays; but most of them observe the holidays the U.S. Congress legally designates for the District of Columbia. The designation of this day as MEMORIAL goes way beyond backyard picnics, swimming pools and sports events for it concentrates our focus on the MEMORY of those whose lives made all of this possible.

The *Parish Family of St. Mary of the Assumption* tries to capture the true meaning of this day as we gather at the Altar of the Lord on Monday morning at 10:00 a.m. The wonderful liturgy celebrated by Father Ed and those involved in the planning of this day very appropriately reflects the MEMORY we all have for those who have given of their lives so that in fact we can celebrate our Faith in freedom. So ... before we enjoy the day with tables of food and moments of fun, might we plan on gathering at the liturgy of the Lord so as to make sure that we always remember MEMORIAL DAY --- for what it *really* means!!!