



# Stronica Proboszcza



## The Pastor's Page

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Solemnity of the Ascension of Our Lord

Rev. Mark A. Borkowski

*Month of the Our Lady*

FrmarkB@aol.com

---

Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!  
Praised be Jesus Christ!

Once again today we are instructed to observe the Solemnity of Christ's ascending into heaven on a Sunday rather than on the 40th day after His glorious resurrection. The bishops of Michigan have made this decision in order to insure Mass attendance on this important commemoration of an event of our salvation history. The thought was, that asking the faithful to attend Mass on a Thursday was asking too much of them and that those who were not able to participate in Mass on Ascension Thursday would forget about this important tenet of our Catholic Faith. And so... for better or worse, we now observe the Ascension of Our Savior on the Seventh Sunday of the Easter Season.

After His resurrection Christ spent some quality time with His disciples and His mother. His teaching continued during this time and certainly their emotions ran high with excitement and joy having Him back again after His brutal crucifixion and death. In this world, however every good thing must come to an end. When Jesus judged that day had come, He went with the disciples and His mother to Mount Olivet, a little over a mile from Jerusalem, and from that place He ascended by His own power into heaven. He went back to that place where it had all begun 33 years earlier, when He left Heaven and was conceived in Mary's womb and then born in the stable of Bethlehem. There could not have been a grander exit!

So much of Christ's glory as the Son of God had been veiled during His life on earth. He was born in obscurity and died in poverty, but now His human followers were beginning to get a glimpse of the majesty of the Son of God. Peter, James and John had glimpsed it before on Mount Tabor during the Transfiguration of Jesus.

Now after enduring so much pain and suffering in this life, Jesus takes possession of the heavenly reward which is rightly His. But Jesus does not retire now to a heavenly throne removed from interaction with the people He loved so much, left behind on earth. No, He goes as to send the Holy Spirit down upon the infant Church He has left below, and He takes His place as THE Mediator between us and His Father. For these reasons, the Solemnity of the Ascension is a great celebration of the Victory of Christ and the Glory of God and it is good, very good and fitting that we should all be here in Church this Sunday to fervently celebrate it!

HAIL THE DAY THAT SEES HIM RISE,  
TO HIS THRONE ABOVE THE SKIES!

## **Sunday, May 13<sup>th</sup> the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima**

On the thirteenth of May in 1917, ten year old Lucia Santos and her younger sibling Jacinta, age nine, and cousin, Francisco Marta, age seven, were looking after sheep at a location known as the Cova da Iria near their home village of Fatima in Portugal. Lucia described seeing a woman “brighter than the sun, shedding rays of light clearer and stronger than a crystal ball filled with the most sparkling water and pierced by the burning rays of the sun.”

Further appearances are reported to have taken place on the thirteenth day of the month in June and July. In these, the woman exhorted the children to do penance and acts of reparation, and to make sacrifices to save sinners. Most important, Lucia said that the lady had asked them to pray the rosary every day, repeating many times that the rosary was the key to personal and world peace. At the time Portugal was fighting in World War I.

Thousands of people flocked to Fatima in the ensuing months, drawn by reports of visions and miracles. The lady appeared again to the children in August and on the thirteenth day of September and October. At the last appearance of the “Lady of the Rosary,” as she identified herself, a crowd of 70,000 had gathered at the Cova. During the appearance the sun appeared to change colors and rotate like a wheel. The lady prophesied a second world war and asked that the rosary be prayed so that Russia would turn away from communism and return to the practice of the faith. In 1930 Pope Pius XI gave the Holy See’s official approval to the appearances. A great shrine has been built at Fatima in Portugal and it continues to be a place of international pilgrimage.

## **Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup> – the Feast of St. Isidore the Farmer**

St. Isidore the Farmer was not educated, but he has something important to teach people living today. He had a deep connection with the earth God gave us. All his life, from the time he was very young, he worked as a farm laborer. He prayed joyfully all day while he worked at plowing, planting and harvesting. All day long, as he walked behind the plow, he was able to commune with his God.

Isidore was born in 1070 and lived near Madrid in Spain. His name in Spanish is Ysidro. He was married to Maria Torribia. The two had one son, who died at a young age. They were poor, but despite these sorrows, Isidore lived a rich life. He was noted for visiting churches on his days off for providing food for those even poorer than himself.

Maria and Isidore also were known for their kindness to animals. All through their lives they had a special concern that animals be treated with compassion, whether they were beasts that pulled the plow or the birds that twittered in the fields. Isidore is the patron saint of Madrid. Together Isidore and Maria are patrons of farmers and farm communities. He died on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1120 at fifty years of age. His wife survived him for several years and they are both venerated as saints in Spain. He was formally canonized in 1622.

## **Wednesday, May 16<sup>th</sup> the Feast of St. Simon Stock**

St. Simon Stock was born in 1165 at Kent, in England, of a distinguished family. He was called “Simon Stock” because at the age of twelve he began living a contemplative life in the hollow (the stock) of a great oak tree, which he made his little chapel and home for twenty years. He became a Carmelite monk and hermit, and, in time, was made the sixth General of the Order, in England. It was to St. Simon Stock, on July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1251, that Our Lady gave the brown scapular. Our Lady promised to all who wore the brown scapular that she would obtain for them the grace of final perseverance in the Catholic Faith. This moment is portrayed in stained glass in our church. On the parking lot side of the church, the third window from the vestibule shows Mary giving the full Carmelite scapular to Simon Stock who kneels in prayer. The window is inscribed: *ofiarowala Tow. Serca Jezusa. gr. 162 Z jed.*, which is translated: offered by the Sacred Heart Society, group #162 of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America.

Saint Simon Stock was one hundred years old when he died. During his life he visited Mount Carmel, which is located in the Holy Land. It is the great mountain dedicated so especially to Mary, the Mother of God, and where the first chapel ever built in her honor was erected in the year 33 AD.

## Thursday, May 18<sup>th</sup> – the Feast of St. Felix of Cantalice

St. Felix was born on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1515 to peasant parents in Cantalice, Italy, in the central Italian region of Lazio. He was third of four sons. His parents were poor peasant farmers. At the age of ten, Felix was hired out first as a shepherd to a family at Cittaducale, where he later worked as a farm hand. Until the age of 28 he worked as a farm laborer and shepherd. He developed the habit of praying while he worked. In 1543, Felix entered the newly founded Capuchin friars as a lay brother in the friary in the town where he had been working. In 1547 he was sent to Rome where he spent the remaining 40 years of his life begging alms to help the friars' work of aiding the sick and the poor.

In Rome, Brother Felix became a familiar sight, wandering barefoot through the streets, with a sack slung over his shoulders, knocking on doors to seek donations. He received permission from his superiors to help the needy when he met them, especially widows with many children. His custom was to greet everyone he met and bless all his benefactors with a "Deo Gratias!" (Thanks be to God!), causing many to refer to him as "Brother Deo Gratias." Though a simple and unlettered man, his holiness and wisdom were so great that saints, like St. Charles Borromeo and St. Philip Neri, consulted him, and many learned theologians went to him for advice.

St. Felix died in Rome in 1587 on his 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday and was buried in the Church of Santa Maria della Concezione dei Cappuccini. In 1625 he was the first Capuchin friar in the history of the Order to be canonized. This took place in Rome on May 22<sup>nd</sup> and was done by Pope Urban VIII. There is a church in Rome dedicated in his honor. In 19<sup>th</sup> century Poland, the Felician Sisters, a religious congregation of Franciscan Sisters of the Third Order Regular, was founded by Blessed Angela Truskowska. Since 1855 they have been caring for the poor under the protection of St. Felix, whom they adopted as their patron saint.

## The Work Goes On!

Hopefully all our parishioners have noticed the obvious improvements to our church like the painting and gold leafing of a great many of the architectural details of our historic church. However, other perhaps not so obvious improvements are also being made. If you sit on the Superior/south side of the church in the benches next to the wall, you will notice a new wood laminate floor under your feet, and you might notice that the walls on that side of the church are once again being painted to look like marble.

Of course the beautiful new adoration chapel is open in the vestibule of the church. And on the outside, the brick wall on the parking lot side of the church is being tuck pointed. The same will be done next on the south side of the church. New glass block windows will also be put in the basement of the church on both sides. The next project will be tuck pointing and recaulking the two big windows in the transepts of the church. Of course more of the floor also will need to be replaced and the painting and gilding will go on forever. It's amazing how much gold leaf work was put into our Italian Renaissance Church when it was built 102 years ago.

This summer we will be getting estimates to replace the old and worn out heating system in the church. It is doubtful that it could get us through another winter season. All of this wonderful work is being done thanks to the generosity of our parishioners. A great deal of the manual labor for these projects is done by the group of parish men calling themselves the "Młotek's" which means the "hammers". A big chunk of the financial backing has come from the various societies of the parish and from some big anonymous donors. The green restoration envelope, found at all the entrances of the church, is for making donations exclusively to the restoration fund by which we pay for these projects. Thanks to all who have used those envelopes to make a contribution. And I invite anyone contemplating donating to this fund to be assured that your gift will be put to very good use.

ON THIS DAY, O BEAUTIFUL MOTHER!

ON THIS DAY WE GIVE THEE OUR LOVE!

The words of this very popular hymn to Our Lady are also most appropriate this weekend as we observe Mothers' Day on the national level. On this Mothers' Day we offer our love to our mothers whether they are still with us or even if they have passed on to the next life. The wonderful maternal relationship we have with our mother is eternal and we are close to them this day in our prayers wherever they may be!

It is my sincere hope that this Mothers' day will be a happy one for all parishioners and their mothers. Our national observance of Mothers' Day was started in the early twentieth century by an American woman named Anna Jarvis. After her mother died, she suggested that a memorial service be held in her church to honor all mothers. The first such service was held in a Philadelphia church in 1908. Those who attended were asked to wear white carnations in memory of their deceased mothers. A colored carnation was worn to honor living mothers.

People were so taken with the observance of such a day that on May 8<sup>th</sup> of 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a joint resolution of Congress recommending that Congress and the executive departments of the Government observe Mothers' Day. The following year, 1915, the President was authorized to proclaim Mothers' Day as an annual national observance to be held on the second Sunday of the month of May. Other countries also adopted the idea.

A mother is a wonderful and important person. She provides life and nourishment to her child by her very nature. A mother gives so much of herself in the care and raising of her children. We need to take time to thank her if she is still with us or pray for her if she has passed from this world. We should prayerfully reflect on the effect that her love and care has had on our lives.

On this day we should also remember all others who are also examples of a mother's love. A woman does not necessarily have to give birth to be a mother to another person. This beautiful day is an occasion for all to joyfully give thanks to God for the blessings we have received from the *Mothers* in our lives!

We honor Mary our supreme and heavenly mother by crowning her image and presenting to her with love and devotion our prayers and good works. May is the month of mothers. It is one of the most beautiful times of the year and the perfect time to honor the mothers, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, godmothers, step-mothers and mothers-in-law who mean so much to us.

### *The Most Important Person...*

on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honor of having built Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not. She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral – a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby's body... The angels have not been blessed with such a grace. They cannot share in God's creative miracle to bring new saints to Heaven. Only a human mother can. Mother's are closer to God the Creator than any other creature; God joins forces with mothers in performing this act of creation... What on God's good earth is more glorious than this: to be a mother?

- Joseph Cardinal Mindzenty

*A Blessed and Happy Mothers' Day  
to all mothers at Our Lady of the Scapular  
and mothers everywhere!*