



Stronica Proboszcza

The Pastor's Page

July 22nd, 2018

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Month of the Most Precious Blood

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!
Praised be Jesus Christ!

Thursday, July 26th, we celebrate the feast day of one of the most beloved woman saints of Christendom – the grandmother of Jesus – “Good Saint Anne.” She is also a very special patron of the city of Detroit – our first Catholic house of worship in the city was placed under her patronage in 1701 by French settlers living near *Fort Pontchartrain du Detroit*.

There are few historical facts concerning the life of Mary's parents, rather tradition from as far back as the second century offers us some ideas about Anne and Joachim. We do know that the name Anne (in Hebrew, Hannah) means grace. Tradition teaches that Anne was descended on her father's side from the tribe of Levi and on her mother's side from the tribe of Judah. She was born in the village of Bethlehem, and married the holy Joachim at an early age.

Sadly the holy couple was unable to bear children. Joachim retired to the desert to fast and pray for his request. Meanwhile Anne prayed fervently and received the message from an angel that God would answer her prayer with a daughter to be named Mary. Anne promised to dedicate the child to service of the Lord and after Mary was born she was presented by Joachim and her mother in Jerusalem as an offering to be brought up in the service of the temple. We know little more of the holy pair, Anne and Joachim, yet can certainly imagine what an influence the grandmother of Jesus would have upon Him, watching over Him as His mother kept herself busy with the work of the house, and soothing those bumps and bruises the holy child may have incurred at play – not unlike our own grandmas cared for us!

The grandmotherly love of St. Anne is still invoked today by thousands who travel annually to her shrine in Quebec. The *Ste. Anne de Beaupre* Shrine is a place where the sick in body and soul are prayed for daily and all who visit there grow in the faith. St. Anne is a saint with broad appeal to old and young alike. So many bear her name and all of us can look to her for help in strengthening our faith as she passed on hers to her child Mary and grandson Jesus.

Images of this popular saint can be found in a great many of the churches of the Archdiocese, including our own. In our church the statue of St. Anne is currently situated just under the Divine Mercy Picture on the right side of the sanctuary. She is depicted with her young daughter Mary, who is holding a scroll with the Ten Commandments listed on it. Certainly St. Anne was the teacher of Mary, instructing her in all the precepts of Israel's faith which find their foundations in the Mosaic Law. This statue was a gift of the Związek Polek in America, group 439. St. Anne is also invoked when a couple is experiencing any kind of trouble in obtaining a child.

Friday, July 27th – Feast of St. Joachim, Father of Mary

The liturgical calendar used in the United States commemorates the saintly parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Anne and Joachim together on July 26th. Poland however observes two separate feasts for these important saints. The feast of St. Anne is celebrated on July 26th as it has been since the sixteenth century. The feast of St. Joachim, her husband and Mary's father, is celebrated on July 27th. The feast of St. Joachim did not appear on the liturgical calendar of the Church until 1584. It was combined with the feast of St. Anne in 1969 on the general Church calendar but remained separate on the liturgical calendars of certain countries like Poland.

The name Joachim in Hebrew means "He whom God has set up." All our information about St. Joachim comes from the Proto-evangelium of St. James, which is not contained in the official books of the bible and so is quite speculative in nature. This tradition says that Joachim was a well to do pious man of the House of David originally from Nazareth, who met his wife Anne and married her in Galilee. The couple then moved to Jerusalem. His wealth is said to have come from raising sheep to supply the temple in Jerusalem with animals for sacrifice.

As was stated in a previous article, his wife was found to be barren. This was understood as a sign of divine displeasure. After forty days of fasting and penance in the desert a girl child was born to the couple. This girl, born and reared in the holy city of Jerusalem, was to be the Mother of the Savior and Messiah. Tradition goes on to say that eventually both Joachim and Anne died in Jerusalem and were buried there.

Of course there is absolutely no way of verifying any of this information. What we can be certain is that the Blessed Virgin Mary was born of two parents in the normal human way. They had to exist without a doubt. What their names actually were is quite inconsequential. And because they did exist, Jesus our Lord had grandparents who were related to him by blood and who undoubtedly loved him and had an influence on him as only grandparents can!

Sunday, July 22nd – Feast of St. Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene stood at the foot of the cross on which Jesus poured out His blood. She came to his tomb with myrrh to embalm His body. And she was the first witness to the risen Christ. Because of her witness to the resurrection, Mary is sometimes pictured with a bright red Easter egg in her hand.

Mary was from Magdala, a town on the western shore of Lake Galilee. The Gospel of Luke says that Jesus healed her of physical and spiritual illness. Scenes from scripture make clear Mary Magdalene's intense devotion to Jesus. With the new freedom brought by her healing, she became one of a group of women who were Jesus' disciples and who walked with him on his missionary journeys. In doing this, these women went against the customs of the time: Women had never been permitted to study with a rabbi.

Mary continued to stay close to Jesus even when he was crucified. The Gospel of John names her as one of three women who stood by the cross. This took great courage.

Chapter 20 of the Gospel of John tells us that Mary went to Jesus' tomb before dawn on Sunday morning. When she saw that the stone in front of the tomb had been rolled away, she thought the officials had stolen Jesus' body. She ran to tell the disciples. Then she returned to the tomb and wept.

Angels appeared to her; then the risen Christ came and stood beside her. She did not recognize the Lord until she heard her name. Then she was asked to be the messenger of the good news. Mary Magdalene was the first to announce that Jesus Christ had conquered death. This is why Mary is called the "apostle to the apostles."

Tuesday, July 24th – Feast of Blessed Cunegunda

Cunegunda, whose Magyar/Hungarian name was Kinga, was born in the year 1224. She was the daughter of Bela IV, King of Hungary, and sister of Margaret of Hungary and Blessed Jolanta, as well as the niece of St. Elizabeth of Hungary. Her mother, who had suffered greatly at former births, was on the

occasion of Cunegunda's birth delivered with ease, and other marvels of a more unlikely nature are recorded of the child's birth and infancy, as that her first cry took the form of a salutation to the Queen of Heaven. Cunegunda was brought up at the court, learning "Latin and the fear of the Lord", and in her sixteenth year was married to Boleslaus V, King of Poland. She had agreed to the marriage, but on her wedding night asked the king to observe continence towards her, as she had given herself to God; to this he agreed for one year, and at the end of that time took with her a vow of perpetual chastity before the bishop of Kraków, for this reason he is known in history as Boleslaus *Wstydlivy*, (the Chaste).

The queen led a most austere life, wearing a hair-shirt under her royal garments and giving much time to the care of the needy and sick. When her husband died in 1279 she refused the wish of the nobles that she should carry on the government of the kingdom and became a Poor Clare in the convent she had founded at *Stary Sącz*, and there passed the rest of her life, dying on July 24th, 1292. She built churches and hospitals, paid the expenses of chapters of the Friars Minor, and ransomed Christians from the Turks. When in 1287 Poland was overrun by the Tartars, the nuns of *Stary Sącz* had to take refuge in the castle of Pyenin which was besieged by the invaders; but at the prayers of St. Cunegunda they drew off. Her last years were marked by many miracles and supernatural manifestations. Her popular cultus was approved in 1690. She has not yet been declared a saint but is known as "blessed."

In the city and Polonia of Detroit, a parish was established with her name in 1927 on the west side of the city. The founding pastor of St. Cunegunda Parish was Fr. Alexander Wilczewski. In 1951 a permanent church was built for the parish at 5900 St. Lawrence Street at Kirkwood just north of I-94 and Michigan Avenue. At present the parish is clustered with St. Barbara Parish in Dearborn.

Wednesday, July 25th – Feast of St. Christopher

According to tradition, St. Christopher died at Lycia in Asia Minor around 251 A.D. Through the centuries many legends have grown up around his name. According to one legend, St. Christopher was an ugly giant who made his living carrying people across a river. He tried to find someone more powerful than himself. Eventually he decided that the only one more powerful than himself had to be Christ, since the devil himself feared the Savior. One day, one of his passengers was a small child who grew so heavy as they crossed the river he feared they would be drowned. The child then revealed that he was the Christ, and that the heaviness was caused by the weight of the world he was carrying on his shoulders. The name Christopher means Christ-bearer, and because of this legend he is the patron of travelers and in modern times particularly of motorists.

Wednesday, July 25th – Feast of St. James the Apostle

On Wednesday, Spain celebrates the feast of its patron, St. James. There, he is called Santiago. Centuries ago the Spaniards built a shrine in his honor at a place called Compostela. Pilgrims from all over Europe visited it. They wore in their hats the shell of a scallop or cockle.

The shell recalled that, before he was called by Christ, James worked as a fisherman. It also reminded the pilgrims how in later years the apostle James baptized new Christians. Pilgrims wearing the shell were granted hospitality wherever they went. There were so many of them that James is considered the patron saint of pilgrims.

James and his brother John were the sons of Zebedee, a fisherman in Galilee. One day Jesus walked along the lake shore. Speaking to the brothers as they mended their nets, he invited them to come with him and learn to "fish for men."

Two men named James became apostles. Today's James is called "James the Greater," perhaps because we know more about him than about "James the Less." Whatever the reason, the James we remember today seems to have been a person who earned the trust of Jesus. With John and Peter, the gospels mention James as a witness to some of Jesus' miracles, such as the cure of Peter's mother-in-law and the raising of Jairus's daughter. James also was present at the Transfiguration of Jesus. James was in the garden of Gethsemane on the night of the Last Supper. Oddly, though, the brothers James and John are often shown

to be bull-headed. They didn't understand that Jesus' mission was one of humility and forgiveness. At one point Jesus gave the two brothers the nickname "sons of thunder" because they wanted to send lightning down on a town that turned them away. According to the twelfth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, James was the first of the Twelve to be martyred. Arrested in Jerusalem by order of King Herod Agrippa, James was put to death with a sword.

Are You Planning on Offering Some of Your Time by Working at the Festival?

As was mentioned in last week's bulletin, there is a great need for parishioners to be generous in donating their time by working at the parish festival in August. Usually when we think of donating to the church we think of money and the Sunday collection, but giving of one's time is also a very real donation. The old saying goes, "time is money." Actually I think time is more valuable than money, because it is limited. We all only have so much of it and there is no way possible to get any more of it when God decides our time here on earth has run out. Your time is precious, and precious things are the kind of things that we make gifts to God of. So.....are you planning to make a gift of your valuable time to your parish by working at the parish festival? Keep in mind that the ultimate purpose of the festival is to keep the church, "God's House," open. So are you planning to make a gift of your time to God?

Our festival is a big one! And we all know that in order for it to run smoothly many hands are needed to do the work. We must all face the reality that our parish is smaller in membership than it once was. Perhaps in times gone by it was possible for a number of parishioners to say, "Well, they have plenty of workers, I just want to go and enjoy the festival and have a good time." This is not the case today. We have a great many parishioners who have faithfully worked every festival since #1! Most of these folks are so much older now that they simply cannot really do all that they once did and all they would still like to do. I see them out there still giving it their all! I want to appeal now to another crowd, a younger one. Those that live a very hectic and busy lifestyle today and perhaps do not consider service to their parish all that important. WE NEED YOU! We need people who love their parish dearly and express that love in faithful service, even when it's not particularly fun or convenient. Doing this is what it means to be a real parishioner and member of this community. Of course it is much easier to just come to Mass on Sunday and that's it. These are part time parishioners and this mind set jeopardizes the health of the parish.

Once again I do want to make a special appeal for workers in the two main outside food booths, known as the "chuck wagons." It would seem to me that these could be rather enjoyable places to work IF there was an adequate number of people working there and that no one was made to carry the burden of this work alone. After all, after beer at most festivals, food is THE most desired item to be obtained and most folks are delighted when they get the Polish food they are craving at our chuck wagons! Once again I ask parishioners who have not yet committed themselves to working the festival to consider working in one of our two very important chuck wagons. If you think you might be willing to make this gift of service to your parish during the festival I would ask you to call one of the two chair persons of the chuck wagons and volunteer yourself. They will be delighted to hear from you! Mr. Mark Zielman at 734-444-5098, and Mrs. Kathi Dwornick at 734-777-7352.

We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give.