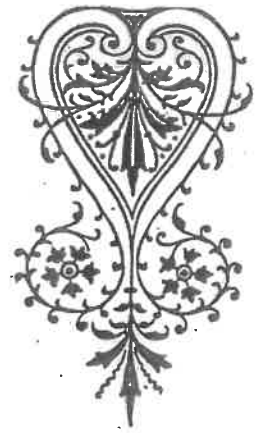


Stronica Proboszcza



The Pastor's Page

August 18th, MMXIX

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Rev. Mark A. Borkowski

Month of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

FrmarkB@aol.com

Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!
Praised be Jesus Christ!

THE COUNTDOWN BEGINS! As of today(Sunday) there are just four full days left for preparations for **Polish Festival 2019!** These are some of THE busiest days of the year in parish life and there is certainly something for everyone to do, who wants to help. In addition to the physical preparations that must be made for the festival, now is the time to begin preparing ourselves spiritually and emotional for the big event. We call this *psyching oneself up* and it too is very important for a truly successful festival. This Sunday while you are sitting in church thinking about all that you will be doing next Sunday, take time to stop and prayerfully recall the very reason we go through all the hard work of a festival each year. That reason is to keep open and operating this *House of God* we call our parish church – **Our Lady of the Scapular!** We keep the church open primarily for the worship of God which takes place therein perfectly, each time the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered on the altar of our church. PLEASE! DO NOT forget this as you labor at the festival this year. It really is a most worthy goal and God Himself will reward you for your labor if it is done cheerfully!

So...in exactly one week from today, we will all be surrounded by delicious food, listening to entertaining music and hopefully surrounded by many happy guests enjoying our parish festival. I have great hope that this year's festival will be one of the best ever! May the dear Lord be merciful to us and grant us perfect festival weather, not too hot, not too cold, a nice breeze to carry the fragrance of the delicious food available and the festive music everywhere, and most of all NO RAIN!!! All parishioners should be praying for this intention NOW!

****There will be a special Mass for Festival workers
next Saturday at 11:45 PM in church.***

***Volunteer Workers are still needed for the Festival!
Please! Sign up TODAY!***

Yes, once again it is time to psyche ourselves up for the festival. The festival is a great deal of hard work for everyone. And all who donate their time and energy deserve a lot of credit and appreciation! The festival is undoubtedly an important fund raising activity in our parish community. But it is SO much more than just that! The annual festival is one of the most important times of year for us, of Polish descent, to put into practice one of the most important Polish proverbs – *Gość w Dom, Bóg w Dom!* A guest in the home is like God in the home! Yes, its all about hospitality, making visitors feel welcome and comfortable in our spiritual home – our parish church!

Hospitality takes a great deal of energy and patience, especially when there will be as many guests in our home as we expect! Please, do not loose sight of our important goal of hospitality when you get so busy during the festival. And please try to remember why we put ourselves through all this. We work to keep the doors of our church open. We know we have a great treasure in the church of the **Our Lady of the Scapular**. And we all know how hard our ancestors worked and sacrificed to give us this treasure. Our hard work at the festival pays tribute to them and honors their memory. We all want to be able to pass this wonderful treasure on to the next generation and to share what we have and love so much with as many people as we can.

Our parish must grow. Making it grow is our apostolic work. Visitors are drawn to it in a very special way. This attraction cannot be explained and yet we understand it well. There will be potential new parishioners among the crowd next week. Let's all make every visitor feel as if they are already part of our family!

Sunday, August 18th – Feast St. Helena

There is no more loved or remembered royal woman among the saints than Saint Helena (also called Helen, Eleanor, Ellen, Eileen, or Elaine) who was an empress and the mother of Constantine the Great. She became a Christian in 313. It was Saint Helen who discovered the True Cross in Jerusalem in 326, four years before she died. She built churches on Mount Calvary, at Bethlehem, and in the little town of Fostat in Egypt where the Holy Family went in flight when Jesus was a Child. St. Helena is also the patroness of the third Polish-American Parish to be established in Wyandotte in 1925 under her name. The parish endured until 2008. Her statue can be found in the alcove between the confessionals on the north side of the church.

Tuesday, August 20th – Feast of St. Bernard

St. Bernard was born in 1090 at Burgundy in France of a noble family. In the year 1111 at the age of 21, he left his home to join the monastic community of Cistercians at Citeaux. His five brothers, two uncles and some thirty young friends followed him into the monastery. Later his father joined the monastery as Bernard's mother had died earlier. Some say the death of his mother at an early age in his life caused Bernard to become more serious and reject the luxurious way of life of the French nobility of his day. Within four years a dying community had recovered enough vitality to establish a new house in the nearby valley of Wormwoods, with Bernard as abbot. The zealous young Bernard was quite demanding, though more on himself than others and suffered a slight but temporary breakdown of health. The valley was soon renamed Clairvaux, the valley of light.

St. Bernard loved his quiet life at Clairvaux. He wrote hymns and meditations. But as his ability as arbitrator and counselor became widely known, people from the outside world began coming to ask for his help. Even disputing princes sought out his peacemaking skills. St. Bernard also intervned in a full-blown schism and settled it in favor of the Roman pontiff against an antipope, by traveling all over Europe in order to urge Christians to obey the lawfully elected Pope Innocent II. Moreover St. Bernard battled so strongly against heresy throughout his life that he was given the name "Hammer of the heretics!"

The Holy See prevailed on St. Bernard to preach the Second Crusade throughout Europe. His eloquence was so overwhelming that a great army was assembled and the success of the crusade seemed assured. The ideals of the men and their leaders, however, were not those of Abbot Bernard, and the project ended as a complete military and moral disaster. Bernard felt responsible in some way for the degenerative

effects of the crusade.

St. Bernard is considered THE greatest figure of the twelfth century. Many of his beautiful writings reflect upon the Blessed Virgin Mary. Like St. Ambrose, St. Bernard is often pictured standing alongside a beehive, because of the sweetness of his words. This great Cistercian saint died at Clairvaux on August 20th, 1153. He was canonized in 1174 and proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1830.

Tuesday, August 21st – Feast of Our Lady of Knock

The shrine of Our Lady in the village of Knock is a Catholic pilgrimage site and the National Shrine of Ireland. It is located in County Mayo and is the place of an apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, St. John the Baptist and Jesus as the Lamb of God in 1879.

As at Lourdes and Fatima the visitations occurred at a time of immense cultural, social and economic change, and occurred to people whose traditional society was under threat from dramatic change. In the 1870's, Ireland was undergoing a period of dramatic upheaval. Some parts of the island had experienced what proved to be the last waves of famine but which nevertheless brought back memories of the Great Irish Famine of the late 1840's that had decimated the countryside. Poverty, unemployment, evictions and emigration were the order of the day.

On the evening of August 21st, 1879, at about 8 o'clock in the evening, fifteen people, whose ages ranged from five years to seventy-five and included men, women, teenagers and children, witnessed what they claimed was an apparition on the south gable end of the local small parish church. The apparition consisted of a plain altar with a cross on it and a lamb with adoring angels. To the left of the altar stood the Blessed Virgin Mary. She wore a white cloak and a golden crown with sparkling crosses and hovered a few feet above the ground. Her eyes and hands were raised to heaven in prayer. St. Joseph was dressed in white with head bowed and St. John the Evangelist stood at Mary's left wearing a bishop's mitre and holding a large open book in his hand. Those who witnessed the apparition stood in the pouring rain for up to two hours reciting the rosary. As it became dark the images shone brightly with a white light until eventually the vision ended. After official ecclesiastical investigation the apparition was eventually declared true and many pilgrims visiting the shrine at Knock report miraculous cures and favors. Each Irish diocese makes an annual pilgrimage to the Marian Shrine and the nine-day Knock novena attracts ten thousand pilgrims every August. A basilica has been built on the grounds of the shrine.

Tuesday, August 21st – Feast of St. Pius X

Pope Pius X was born in 1835 in Treviso, Italy and was baptized Giuseppe Sarto. He was one of ten children. His father was a postman. Giuseppe was ordained a priest at age 23 and became known as a gentle pastor who loved to serve his people, especially the poor. He was also a talented leader. He was appointed bishop of the Italian city of Mantua in 1884 and then archbishop of Venice. He was then named a cardinal in 1893. However, both of these positions were offered to him only after debate within the church. Some people thought such positions should be given only to priests from the upper classes.

In 1903 at age 68 Pius was elected pope, and he was the first peasant to hold that office since the Middle Ages. Pius was pope for eleven years, during which time he wished to "renew all things in Christ."

Pius thought that children should be allowed to receive communion as soon as they were old enough to understand its importance. He took steps to improve Christian education for children and adults. He improved church music and simplified the liturgical calendar. He encouraged people to read scripture every day.

A simple and unpretentious person all his days, Pius never got used to the formality of life in the Vatican. One day, when an old friend came to visit, he burst into tears, saying, "Look how they have me dressed up!"

Pius felt great compassion for people. On the eleventh anniversary of his election as pope, the First World War was declared. In Rome he said goodbye to a large group of students called back to their homes all over Europe because of the war. They were from England, France, Germany, Austria, Belgium and other

countries. Soon they would be fighting each other. He asked them to be merciful, even as soldiers. He knew this huge war would bring great suffering. The knowledge broke his heart. Three weeks later he died. His incorrupt body was venerated in St. Peter's basilica but in 1959 it was returned to Venice, thus fulfilling his promise when he left for the papal election in 1903: "Living or dead, I shall return."

Thursday, August 22nd – Feast of the Queenship of the Virgin Mary

In times past, most of the important church feasts were celebrated for eight days. This period of eight days is called an octave. Every week of the year is a kind of octave because Sundays always fall eight days apart. In Church tradition, an octave represents eternity. It may seem strange to us but here's why: Seven days make a normal, run-of-the-mill week. But add an eighth day and you've got something special. You've got a week that ends and begins on the same day. In the early church, they thought that eight days was a symbol of perfection and of heaven.

Today is the eighth day after the solemnity of the Assumption. We honor Mary as the *regina caeli*, the queen of heaven. Psalm 45 was sung on Assumption Day and it is sung today as well. It speaks of a queen in a golden robe. Wherever she goes, she brings justice and splendor and great rejoicing. Jewish songs refer to the Sabbath that way. When it arrives, it is like a queen whose beauty chases away all sorrow.

Saturday, August 24th – Feast of St. Bartholomew, Apostle

St. Bartholomew is an apostle about whom not much is known. The gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke mention him in their lists of the Twelve. The first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles mentions him waiting with the other disciples for the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Gospel of John doesn't actually mention Bartholomew but includes the name Nathaniel with the other apostles. If these two are the same person, we have a touching story of how he was called by Jesus to discipleship.

Chapter one of the Gospel of John describes the first meeting of Jesus and Philip. Afterward, Philip immediately went to tell his friend Nathaniel the good news of this remarkable prophet. Nathaniel joked that if Jesus was from Nazareth he couldn't be any good. Nathaniel was from Cana, and the two towns were neighbors and rivals. When Nathaniel came to see for himself, Jesus praised him as being "one in whom there is no deceit." Nathaniel probably wondered how this teacher could possibly know such a thing. But as they talked Nathaniel realized that Jesus must be from God.

Many countries claim to be the place where Bartholomew preached the good news after the descent of the Holy Spirit. The strongest traditions are found in India and Armenia. Most likely he did go to Armenia, where he converted the king and, at the order of the king's brother, was skinned alive, according to the Persian custom and then beheaded. For this reason he is usually depicted holding a tanner's knife, with his own hide draped over his arm. His relics were transferred to various places. The skull of St. Bartholomew is venerated in Frankfurt, Germany, since 1238 and his arm has been venerated at England's Canterbury Cathedral since the eleventh century.

Volunteering for the Festival

Next week the festival takes place. It is a major fund raiser for the parish. From a financial perspective I am not certain the parish could survive without the money the festival generates. According to the 1974 Parish Diamond Jubilee Book the parish festival was begun at the initiation of Father Stanley Redwick to be held in August of 1973. This was a much different time in the parish. Parish membership was in excess of 2000 households and of course both the grade school and high school were in operation. There were many, many more people on hand to volunteer to work at the festival, which eventually became a very big one. Now there are just over 760 households. And yet the festival is as big as ever which requires so much help. If you have not volunteered to work at the festival as of yet it is not too late. This year there is a particularly great need for help in the big tent with the games. Please consider giving a call to one of the captains listed in the bulletin and offering your services. Thank you.