

## **BULLETIN – APRIL 19**

**First Communion congratulations** go out to all our youngsters who made their First Communion with us last Sunday morning, April 12. They are:

Sean Michael Boonstra

Lillian Ann Bouma

Addison Nicole Bradford

Ben James Flickinger

Isaac James Robles

Kieran Michaela Rodney

Kiegan Renae Terhaar

We also extend our sincere thanks to our catechists, Mary and Maggie Hassinger; our religious education director, Sally Augdahl; and the parents, godparents, relatives, and friends who have inspired and helped our First Communicants to this important step in their initiation into the Body of Christ and his sacramental mysteries.

**FINAL NOTICE: Welcome to a Catholic school!** Bishop Walkowiak, in conjunction with the Office of Catholic Schools, is pleased to announce the Welcome Scholarship for the 2015-16 school year! Consistent with its name, the scholarship seeks to “welcome” students who are new to Catholic school education. There are several key elements to note:

- Eligible applicants are incoming students who did not attend a Catholic school in the Diocese of Grand Rapids at all during the 2014-15 school year and do not currently have a sibling enrolled in a Catholic school in the diocese

- To qualify, students (or their families) must be registered members at a parish in the Diocese of Grand Rapids

- The scholarship is available (regardless of financial need) from Preschool through 11th grade at the following one-time award levels:

- o Preschool: \$250 per student

- o K-8th Grade: \$750 per student

- o 9th-11th Grade: \$1,000 per student

- Students who receive the Welcome Scholarship are still eligible for other scholarships (e.g., through the Bishop’s Scholarship Fund or local parish scholarships)

- New students who meet the above criteria and have already enrolled for the 2015-16 school year are still eligible to receive the award.

The application can be accessed through the website at **CatholicSchools4U.org** under Welcome Scholarship. We want to share this scholarship information with **all** current and prospective families. There are a limited amount of Welcome Scholarships available. Please, submit applications as soon as possible.

**Thank you!** Even as the C.S.A for 2015 is winding up, the C.S.A. for 2014 is winding down--but not expired yet! Thanks to your generosity in fulfilling your pledges from last year, we have been able to receive and add another rebate of **\$846.10** to the total of what has come back to us, which now stands at **\$20,848.14**.

**The Catholic Services Appeal** has had several names since the Diocese of Grand Rapids began in 1882. Under our first bishop, Henry Joseph Richter (1883-1916), it was referred to as the seminary collection, since its primary purpose was to educate and provide home-grown priests for the new local church or diocese, which then covered the territory north and east all the way to Mackinaw City and Saginaw. Because the majority of institutions and other services were provided by various orders of religious sisters, there were few other demands on the annual diocesan collection. At the direction of Bishop Francis J. Haas (1943-53), the annual collection became the "Fund for the Faith." As the change of title indicated, its purposes were a bit wider in scope than just seminary education. Bishop Haas, himself a noted sociologist, established the Catholic Service Bureau, which has since morphed into Catholic Charities West Michigan; and directed the expansion of several Catholic high schools in our old 29-county area.

When Bishop Allen J. Babcock (1954-69) arrived in Grand Rapids, he was intent on expanding the role of the diocese in providing new and renewed services for its people. The annual drive became the "Diocesan Development Fund," and was accompanied by a grand structure of deanery chairmen, parish chairmen, and promotional dinners with a cumulative cast of dozens of priests and hundreds of parish workers, who would visit every home in each parish individually and solicit funds for the D.D.F., which always had a highlighted purpose. One year it was for a new gym for St. Joseph's Seminary, another year for the new St. John's Home, another year for Villa Elizabeth, and so on. But there were also increased expenditures for the standard services which people were coming to expect from the diocese: a schools office, religious education training, the TV Mass, and of course the ongoing need for the education of future priests.

Bishop Joseph M. Breitenbeck (1969-89) changed the D.D.F. into the Catholic Services Appeal or C.S.A., imitating the appeals in the Archdiocese of Detroit and many other places. The C.S.A. pays the modest salaries of diocesan personnel, and continues to support all the services which God's people have come to expect of their Church on a super-parochial level.

That all brings us to the here and now. As a parish of medium size among the 82 parishes of the diocese, our annual goal is usually right around or just below 1% of the total requested from all the parishes together. As you begin pondering your Catholic Services Appeal gift for the coming year, C.S.A. 2015, we are pleased to inform you that our target is just about the same as last year, **\$43,173**. I am confident that we can find 100 donors among our parishioners who can sacrifice \$430 apiece over the course of a year, or 200 who can do \$215. Think of it as \$20 a month, or half a tank of gas at current prices. Will you finance the spread of the Gospel of Christ in our local church here in West Michigan for half a tank of gas a month? A full tank? Put it in perspective, and it's not really asking all that much for being part of such a privileged mission. God bless you!

Fr. Den

**Overheard in a fancy restaurant:** “That wine is so dry, they ought to call it *pinot more!*”