

BULLETIN -- APRIL 23

Our First Communion class this year is a small but prayerfully powerful group who edify us at the 9:30 Mass this Sunday with their devout reception of the Eucharist for the first time. We extend our sincere congratulations to **Abbie Rose Flores Boonstra**, daughter of Jeremiah and Shannon; **Bryan Maciej Kozak**, son of Maciej and Kimberly; **Lucille Ann Raap**, daughter of Marvin and Denise; and **Philip Norman Worm**, son of Michael and Rose. We praise God for adding to the strength and holiness of the Church through you!

Over achievers? Naw, just doing their job! Congratulations anyway, to our West Catholic scholars who have made the 3rd quarter honor roll. Their grade levels are in (parentheses): Nathan Augdahl (9), Wyatt Davis (10), Margaret Edozie (9), Michael Edozie (11), Holly Holtzclaw (11), Samantha Knight (12), Bridget Kohane (10), Joshua Kohane (11), Maria Marzolf (10), Olivia Marzolf (10), and Ciera Rodney (10). Way to go!

Thank you to a faithful bulletin reader from another parish who has called our attention to an inadvertent omission. Any reference to Holy Family Radio 1140 AM is incomplete without mentioning 98.3 FM, which broadcasts in the metro Grand Rapids area 24 hours a day! With that knowledge, you won't have to break the Second Commandment when your favorite question-and-answer show is interrupted by the 1140 AM sign-off in the late afternoon or early evening.

Genocide? In Iceland? Can you imagine a government and a society being excited about eradicating 100% of a given group of people from its midst just because they are "different"? The progressives among us should be shrieking in terror about this apparent war on diversity. Is there no respect for the unique culture of these persons? How barbaric! Oh, excuse me, about whom are we speaking?

The volcanic island country of Iceland is engaged in self-admiration over the marvelous achievement of eliminating 100% of its Down syndrome population by aborting them in the womb. Medical science has long been able to discover the presence of the extra chromosome that indicates Down syndrome, and many in the medical community around the world consider it to be great progress when they can abort a baby with the extra chromosome. We in the U.S. have some way to go before we reach Iceland's efficiency at eliminating our "undesirables." We as yet only abort 93% of those with Down syndrome. Ah, yes, what a backward society we are.

Oh, but they don't count, our progressives will say. THOSE people are an inconvenience for their families and for all the rest of us. THEIR lives aren't worth living. Oh. Who gives us the right to decide that? Who's next, Mr. or Ms. Progressive? What about trans-gendered people, who in spite of their infinitesimally small numbers are certainly providing some very inconvenient moments and situations to the rest of society? Oh, that's different. They're a protected class. Privileged, even. And besides, they're already born. And that's NOTHING like Down syndrome. I mean, THOSE people probably don't even read the *New Yorker*!

Humongous fungus. The blue whale? Nah. The lady who was sitting in front of you, blocking your view at the IMAX movie? Nope. The guy wedged into the seat next to you on your last flight to New Zealand? Not even close. As far as science has yet discovered, the largest single living organism on the face of the earth grows mostly underground in an ancient forest in the Blue Mountains of eastern Oregon.



The honey mushroom measures 3.5 miles across at one point, covering an area of 2200 acres. (One square mile is 640 acres, the area from Turner to Garfield and Leonard to Bridge. Three of those.) The fungus was discovered in the late 1990's using aerial photos and testing DNA cultures from 112 dying trees. This one organism, starting from a single microscopic spore, has been spreading beneath the forest floor for an estimated 2,400 years (that's since about 400 B.C.), slowly killing trees and consuming them as it grows. A sample of the above-ground fruiting portions is shown in the photo. The largest of them weighs about 300 pounds. A similar honey mushroom grows in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, covering about 40 acres near Crystal Falls. Is it edible? Unless you're an expert, show your liver some love and stick to shitakes and portabellas, morels and stumpers. Better to be safe than to be pushing daisies and mushrooms in the graveyard. You don't have to eat all of God's wonders to enjoy and be amazed at them.

Catholic Services Appeal (CSA) 2017. Talk about amazing, our parish participation in CSA has been nothing short of that. For many years now, we have been able to meet our target, doing our part to satisfy the Diocese's need; and in fact have considerably exceeded our target, making available funds for a wide range of parish apostolates and special needs. The great generosity of a few donors has inspired more generosity from those of lesser means and from those on fixed incomes, so that our charity to this annual appeal has truly been a community response to the needs that are laid out for us. Together, we do more than any of us could do individually. And together with the other 80+ parishes here in West Michigan, we do far more than we could just as a single parish.

If you have not already, you will soon be receiving in the mail some information from Bishop Walkowiak about CSA 2017. The Bishop has been eager to encourage families to consider Catholic schooling for our children, especially for those who have not yet tried it. He is excited about the slowly increasing number of seminarians we have studying for the priesthood. He has shown great respect for our local diocesan history by making funds available for some necessary repairs and improvements at our oldest Catholic cemetery, St. Andrew's on Madison Avenue. These things all help to give a vibrant witness to Christ on behalf of his believers at SS. Peter & Paul. If you don't get your letter in the mail, please let us know. We'll be happy to provide you with all the information in order to achieve 100% participation. God bless you!

Fr. Den

Thought for the week: “If you are depressed, you are living in the past. If you are anxious, you are living in the future. If you are at peace, you are living in the present” (Laozi [Lao Tzu], Chinese philosopher, 604-531 B.C.).