

## BULLETIN -- MAY 1

**Welcome, Fire Fighters!** Our area fire fighters, retirees, family members, and friends join us today to honor their patron St. Florian with the annual Mass and breakfast. Florian was a commander in the Roman army and a convert to Christianity. He was in charge of organizing fire brigades and leading troops whose job was to rescue people from fires. When word reached Rome during the persecution of Emperor Diocletian in the early 300's that Florian was not enforcing proscriptions against Christians in the military, he was investigated. Upon refusing to sacrifice to the pagan gods, he became a martyr by being drowned in the Enns River in Austria, with a millstone tied around his neck. There is strong devotion to him throughout central Europe; and in Germany the name "Florian" is even used to call units in fire radio traffic, for example, "Florian 2," "Florian 9," and so on. By happy coincidence, he is also honored as one of the patron saints of brewers.

**WCHS and CCHS honor roll** for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter includes our following parishioners, with grade level in (parentheses): at West Catholic: Joshua Augdahl (10), Wyatt Davis (9), Michael Edozie (10), Holly Holtzclaw (10), Bridget Kohane (9), Maria Kohane (12), Maria Marzolf (9), Olivia Marzolf (9), Ciera Rodney (9), John Worm (12), and Joseph Worm (9); and at Catholic Central: Luz de Maria Anleu (12).. Congratulations to all, with an assurance of our prayers for all of our students who do us proud with their best efforts!

**Worshiping his own way.** It was at a Bible study some years ago that a very pious lady spoke up in defense of her son, whom another member of the group had mentioned that she hadn't seen at church lately. "Well," she ventured, "I guess he worships in his own way." We could tell she was grasping at straws. Such faint praise from one's own mother doesn't exactly convince others of one's virtue.

We hear such things often enough. "I don't believe that I have to go to Mass in order to be a good Catholic." Oh, really? And who gave you the right to act contrary to Scripture and to deny the validity of God's own Word? Being Catholic on your own terms is completely contrary to what it means to be Catholic, which is surrendering to Christ who called you and being PART of a company of witnesses. So, where are ya?

"I can pray on the golf course." Give me a break. We *ought* to pray always and everywhere, but that's not the prayer that Christ spoke of at the Last Supper when he told the Apostles, "Do *this* in memory of me." He wasn't thinking of 3-under-par, any more than you're *really* thinking of him when you're sizing up that putt.

Lame excuses only show that we have either no understanding of Christ's challenging message or no intention of following through on our baptismal promises. If it *meant* something to us, we'd be here. After all, the Gospel of Luke, 4:16, tells us about Jesus coming home to Nazareth: "He went to the synagogue on the Sabbath, **as was his custom.**" If the Son of God while he was on earth was in the habit of worshiping with God's people on the appointed day, what's your excuse for not being in that same habit?

"Just because you go to church on Sunday doesn't make you a good person." No, but it sure can help give you a head start. But even that's beside the point. Why is it so difficult for you to admit that God commands it of us, not because *he* needs it, but because as our Creator he knows *we* do? Is it possible that you just don't like anyone, not

even God himself, telling you what to do and what pleases him? How can you possibly get a heart that stubborn to expand far enough to drink in the infinite and eternal mysteries of the Kingdom? Don't you care enough about eternal life with God to *want* it, or even to *hear* about it?

"I know a lot of people who go to church, and they're still no good." If that's the case, think how bad they'd be if they *didn't* go to church! But seriously, is that what you're going to do at your judgment – just compare yourself to other sinners? If you haven't taken the opportunity to learn the language of heaven while you're here on earth, how well are you going to be able to understand it? And what will you tell God when you are confronted with the fact that you passed up the chance to enjoy the saving mysteries *he gave you* in the Mass, over and over again?

Let's get down to the nitty-gritty: Do you believe that Christ is the Son of God? If the answer to that is yes, then why don't you love him as *he* directs rather than arrogantly following your own way?

**Treasures from Our Tradition.** From the earliest centuries, we know that some Christian women desired to vow themselves to a celibate life to pray and serve. Some, but by no means everyone, wanted a kind of monastic life. By the 4<sup>th</sup> century (the 300's) and with the end of the great persecutions, the Church was celebrating the "Consecration of Virgins," a rite performed by the bishop, and involving a "veiling" of the woman. It was looked upon as a form of marriage with Christ, partly because in the culture of the day a woman's status in society was linked to a man. The prayers and ritual for the consecration of virgins were exactly the same as the prayers and ritual for the consecration of a bride on her wedding day. The public character of the rite gave the bishop the opportunity to commend the virgin to the faithful, and to threaten with punishment anyone who tried to turn her from her commitment. Eventually, the rite fell into disuse for women living in the world, and was reserved for nuns. The Second Vatican Council directed that it be revived and restored; and in nearly every diocese, single women have embraced this form of consecrated life. (Rev. James Field, Copyright © J.S. Paluch Co.)

**'Tis the month of our mother . . .** St. John recalls that Jesus on the cross addressed some of his "seven last words" to his mother and to the Beloved Disciple: "Woman, behold your son." "Son, behold your mother." "And from that hour," John says, "the disciple took her into his care" (John 19:26-27). The implication is that for anyone who wishes to be a "beloved disciple" of the Lord Jesus, a good place to start is in a loving relationship with his holy mother. Our belief in the communion of saints means that we understand that *we are family*. The great saints who have gone before us support us both with their prayers of intercession around God's throne as well as with their virtuous example. God's own Word reveals Mary speaking in her *Magnificat* in Luke 1:48: "From this day on, all generations will call me blessed." Let us be among those generations who fulfill that prophetic word of God, and not fail to show Mary the respect and honor due her as the Mother of God, the Mother of the Savior, and Mother of the Church. God bless you!

**Thought for the week:** Is it possible that we face so many problems today because those who work for their living are gradually being outnumbered by those who vote for people who promise to *give* them a living?