

## **BULLETIN -- NOVEMBER 22**

**Thank you!** Your cooperation in fulfilling your pledges to the Catholic Services Appeal has resulted in yet another check from The Diocese refunding monies collected over and above our parish target. The check for the month of October amounts to **\$4,378**, which will be added to our regular checking account to help pay our bills, especially those which will of course increase with the wintry weather. I said it at the beginning, and I'll say it at the end: **Thank you!**

**Sister Emeliana Judis, O.P.**, the sister of our beloved late pastor Msgr. Walter F. Jude, died on Sunday, November 8, 2015, and was buried from Marywood on Wednesday, November 11. Sister Emeliana had a long career as an elementary school teacher, and spent some time in the late 1990's in her parents' native Lithuania, working to help revitalize the Church there after 50 years of Communist suppression. It was my privilege to accompany her and Monsignor Jude and their sister, Sister Donata, for a 3-week trip to Lithuania in August, 1995. I still have vivid memories of that trip, one of my favorites being the little restaurant we stopped at 'way out in the country. We had been traveling quite a spell on dusty rural roads, and needed to freshen up before sampling the proprietor's offerings. Sister delicately asked the man, "*Kur yra prausykla?*" ("Where's the washroom?"), only to be told very simply, with a nod in the general direction, "*Lauke!*" ("Out back!") And sure enough, there was a pump, next to an outhouse, which had to be entered by gingerly stepping around the owner's cow, who was happily munching on grass in the immediate vicinity. Sister stayed on to work in Lithuania when we came home, but she had to return within a couple months. "It turned cold the day you left," she told us later, "and I never did warm up after that. It was so bitterly cold, even indoors bundled in sweaters, that I simply couldn't do the work that I was there for." Rest in peace, dear Sister in Christ, and may your Lord welcome you into the Kingdom in heaven which you served so faithfully on earth.

**Thanksgiving Day** Mass is at 9 a.m. Let's make this the American holyday that we observe so faithfully in every other way by sharing in worship together. Invite parishioners or friends who haven't been to church in a long time to come with you before we go our separate ways for parades, football, family, and dinner. "Eucharist" means "thanksgiving." Help us fill the church with gratitude to God. The offering will go to Capitol Lunch to serve meals to our city's residents in need.

**Our Latvian friends** invite us to their Christmas Market Arts & Crafts and International Bake Sale on Sunday, December 6, from 11:30 a.m. till 3 p.m. The event will be held at the Latvian Hall at 504 Grand Avenue, N.E., 1 block north of Michigan Street. An interesting variety of Christmas gifts will be available for purchase, along with wonderful homemade baked goods. A delicious hot lunch will be served. Anyone wishing to have a table to sell arts and crafts items, please call Nell Barkans at 821-1797. Our participation is invited.

**Confirmation news!** Our students who are planning to be confirmed will celebrate the sacrament on **Tuesday, March 8, 2016**, at 7 p.m. at the Cathedral with

Bishop Walkowiak. Sincere thanks to our catechist, Mrs. Cathy Lindgren, for her fine and conscientious work in preparing our young people. **If you are older than 8<sup>th</sup> grade**, have not been confirmed, and are not in RCIA, we'll be having classes on the Friday evenings of February 19, March 4, and March 18 to prepare you. Attendance at all three sessions with your confirmation sponsor is a requirement. If those dates don't work for you, we suggest you try the preparation at another parish or wait until fall. Remember, your sponsor must be an active, practicing Catholic. A godparent is preferred, but any confirmed Catholic other than a parent is also eligible. Start thinking now about a confirmation name, the name of a saint whom you wish to honor or emulate in your own life. Remember that the Church is most eager that any Catholic being married should be confirmed before marriage, if at all possible. So, if you have a wedding coming up and either you or your Catholic fiancé(e) is not yet confirmed, this is tailor-made for you. **With the Bishop's permission, any high schoolers and adults who are in need of the sacrament of confirmation will be confirmed at the Easter Vigil on Saturday, March 26, 2016, at 8 p.m.** Please plan ahead. Call the parish office at 454-6000 to register, so we have a sufficient amount of materials available.

**Fantastic Fantasia.** Last Sunday, I had the opportunity to attend the Grand Rapids Symphony's musical accompaniment of portions of Disney's noted film *Fantasia*, the original version of which celebrates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its premiere this month. The program was a combination of portions of the 1940 movie and portions of the remake *Fantasia 2000*. As usual, the filmmakers should have resisted the desire to think they could equal or improve on the master work. To my mind, Disney's animators in the 1930's and '40's, producing thousands and thousands of pages of hand-drawn art to blend seamlessly into a motion picture, are unsurpassed by the computer-generated animation to which the studios resort today. Seeing examples of each was an experience in running alternately hot and cold, and the more modern work left me cold.

Part of the classic 1940 film is *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, starring Mickey Mouse in the title role. The movie was drawn to accompany French composer Paul Dukas' symphonic poem of the same name. Disney's brilliant interpretation can embed itself in the mind so powerfully that anytime the music is heard, the images of Mickey and the broom gone wild are easily recalled. In contemporary terms, Mickey causes the broom to become his personal robot, and much chaos ensues. Beyond that, though, the tale can serve as an apt parable of what happens when we play around with creation in a cavalier manner. The introduction of non-native species of animals and plants has brought us the chestnut blight, Dutch elm disease, kudzu, Asian carp, the emerald ash borer, and killer bees, to name only a few. China's recently-modified one-child policy has already been wreaking moral and sociological havoc on a nation whose leaders have sought to control population growth through maiming (forced sterilization) and homicide (forced abortion). In our own country, even some Catholic couples engage in playing "embryo roulette," having their children conceived *in vitro* and then frozen until one can be implanted at a more convenient time while the rest are destroyed. And we have not even begun to experience all the bizarre effects of transgender and transhuman medical and social experimentation. These are only samples of what we unleash when we insist on pushing the envelope farther than divine revelation would allow. Like the sorcerer's apprentice, when we come to believe we can do as we please without reference to the Creator, we

embark on a voyage into the unknown for which we are neither designed nor equipped. You'd think we would have learned something from the examples cited above. God bless you!

Fr. Den

**Thought for the week:** “Live so that you wouldn't be afraid to sell the family parrot to the town gossip” (Will Rogers, 1879-1935).