

## **BULLETIN -- SEPTEMBER 24**

**Welcome to our Festival!** Thank you to all our parishioners and guests for joining us once again for our grand Fall Festival this Sunday. Special thanks to the football teams of West Catholic High School for their willingness to help us with setup and teardown. If you forgot to sign up for a work detail earlier, just look up Dennis or Lisa Vainavicz on the grounds or in the school. They will probably have an idea of how you could be of help. Have a WONDERFUL afternoon!

**Is it YOU?** We've had numerous complaints from parishioners and visitors about loud talking in church, both before and after our weekend Masses. Please keep in mind that one of the many gifts of our 94-year-old church building is near-perfect acoustics, especially from the rear. That means that, even though you might not think so, we can follow nearly every conversation that you might think you're whispering, from almost anywhere in the church. If a conversation is so urgent that it cannot wait, please take it outside. "My house is a house of prayer," says the Lord, and many would like to take advantage of the quiet place for prayer and reflection that our church should afford them. Thank you for your consideration.

**Loaves and fishes.** And vegetables and fruit. And maybe some imperishables. Those are some of the things that we would like to provide from time to time for our neighbors here in our parish territory. It's no secret that this is no longer a "Catholic" neighborhood. As late as the mid-1950's, the city directory for Turner, Broadway, Hamilton, Quarry, Muskegon, Crosby, Myrtle, and Webster displayed a nearly house-to-house roll call of parishioner families, most of them of Lithuanian descent. Times have clearly changed, and the number of parishioner households within our parish boundaries can be counted on not much more than ten fingers. Yet the parish territory remains our pastoral responsibility. How do we carry out evangelization in missionary territory?

Long before he sat down with his Apostles for the Last Supper and the institution of the Eucharist, Our Lord fed the multitude on the hillsides with loaves and fishes, as much as they wanted to satisfy their hunger. It was a gift and a miracle that would **prepare** the minds and hearts that were alert to it for the far greater gift of his Body and Blood as food and drink for eternity. Through our community food pantry at Trinity Reformed and through our food voucher program with Ralph's Market, we try to make sure that no one in our area goes to bed hungry. But that doesn't mean they're always well-nourished. Malnutrition can take place when people eat the wrong foods, or don't get enough of the right ones. Sometimes it's as simple as providing something nourishing that people would not buy when fast food or low-nutrient junk food appears easier and more appetizing.

Enter SS. Peter & Paul Food Service, a new branch of our Christian service outreach. We propose to do "saturation visits" of various corners of our parish neighborhood perhaps once or twice a month, with pairs of parishioners outfitted in parish aprons for easy identification. We'll have a car or a van or a pickup with a generous supply of, say, peaches and apples and cabbage one time, pears and squash and cans of tuna the next. Going door-to-door, we'll introduce ourselves and ask the

residents if there's anything they'd like, and then give it to them, as much as they want, for free. Not a whole meal, but good food items, a gift from God's people at SSPP. No obligation, no strings attached. Here's a parish bulletin, and remember that our church is always open during the day for prayer. Do you have any intentions you would like us to pray for? We'll jot it down on the pad of paper in our apron pocket, and bring it to church to add to our list of prayer intentions. God bless you, have a wonderful day. Then we'll go on to the next house, until the food runs out. Then next time, we'll start where we left off, and gradually become occasional visitors in every part of our relatively small parish area. No high pressure, no hard sell. That wouldn't be the Catholic way, anyway. But food and drink? Wow, we're the experts! No one's ever complained about the Good Grief Girls serving only milk and vindmill cookies!

Give the parish office a call if you'd like to be put on the volunteer list for this service. You'd be amazed at how many people in the neighborhood are well aware that we're here. They've even asked what happened to the church bell when something has gone haywire. We never know how God will use something as simple as a good word and food and drink to change hearts and minds and lives. After all, he does it at every Mass, and look what he's got to work with!

**Welcome to the neighborhood!** The greeting goes out to the members of the Mbaraga family, due to arrive by plane from a refugee camp in Rwanda after living many years in exile in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This is an older family, the youngest son being 15 years of age. After years of waiting, they have been approved by the U.S. government to come to our country for resettlement, to build a new life for themselves. They are sponsored by Bethany Christian Services, and our parish is serving as co-sponsor for their first six months. They will be living at 1521 Quarry N.W., just three doors north of St. George's. We couldn't say no, since, as we mentioned earlier, we have a pastoral responsibility for ALL the people in our territory. So we are responding to God's call. If you'd like to join the welcoming crew at the airport this Wednesday, September 27, at 5:45 p.m., please call Dennis Vainavicz at 454-5611. Plenty of other opportunities are also available to help out, so please let Dennis know of any availability, furnishings, or supplies you might have.

**Like making waves?** Ride the air waves with us and listen to 1140-AM WVHF Holy Family Radio. What you learn about your Catholic faith will spill over into the lives of others and enrich your membership in the Church exponentially. God bless you!

Fr. Den

**Thought for the week:** "It is strange that men should see sublime inspiration in the ruins of an old church and see none in the ruins of a man" (Gilbert Keith Chesterton, 1879-1935, English Catholic author).

**Senior thought for the week:** I decided to change calling the bathroom the John and renamed it the Jim. I feel so much better saying I spent time in the Jim this morning.