



St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church

Temperance, Michigan

Third Sunday of Easter

"The Antonian"

April 30, 2017

ST. ANTHONY'S DIRECTORY

PASTOR

Father Brian Hurley.....734-854-1143
fatherbrianhurley@stanthonytemperance.org

Rectory.....734-854-1143
4605 St. Anthony Road, Temperance, MI 48182

Fax.....734-854-4622

Parish E-mail.....stanthony@bex.net

Web site: stanthonytemperance.org

OFFICE STAFF:

Michelle Lindsey, Parish Secretary: 734-854-1143

Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 9am - 4pm

Linda Moeltner, Business Office: 734-854-8445

Office Hours: Monday & Tuesday: 9am - 3pm

busadmin@stanthonytemperance.org

DIRECTOR OF LITURGY & MUSIC

Eric Hite.....419-266-0571.....ehite820@gmail.com

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

Ginny Stout, RE Coordinator.....734-854-1160

Office Hours: Monday - 10am - 6pm

dredu@stanthonytemperance.org

Weekend Mass Schedule

Saturday (Sunday Vigil) (OF-MC): 5:00pm

Sunday (OF-MC): 9:00am & 11:00am

Holy Days: Check Bulletin & Website

Sacrament of Penance

Saturday: 3:30-4:30pm;

First Wednesday: 6:30-7:30pm (September - May)

Second Tuesday: 6:00-6:30pm (September - May)

Devotions

First Friday: 7:00pm Mass (OF-LM)

First Saturday: 9:00am Mass (EF-MC)

O. L. of Perpetual Help & Prayer - Wednesday @ 6:15pm

Prayer Blankets

Sandy Maenle.....734-847-7813

Prayer Chain

Miriam Dressel.....734-888-1192

† Our Sacramental Policy †

Six-month Parish registration and participation are required for Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage.

Baptisms: Arrangements must be made in advance and parents must attend a baptism class. The Church requires that at least one of the parents be a practicing Catholic, and the Godparents must be active, practicing, fully initiated Catholics at least 16 years of age. If two Godparents: must be 1 male & 1 female; if one Godparent: may be male or female.

Marriage: Arrangements must be made at least nine months in advance. Please call the rectory office. Officiate at the ceremony must be St. Anthony Parish Pastor or a family member.

Funerals: Officiate must be St. Anthony Parish Pastor or a family member.

Please note: The services of the Parish Organist are used for all sacramental liturgies.



For more details regarding our Sacramental policies and procedures, please refer to the Sacrament link on our Parish web-site.

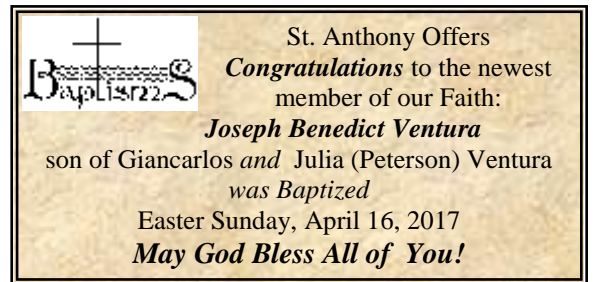


confirmation

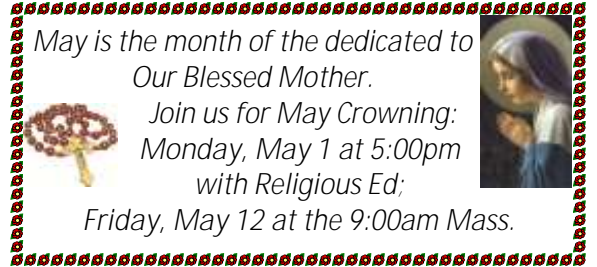
Wednesday, April 26, 2017
The Most Reverend
Francis Reiss

Trevor Brown Evelyn Dillon
Michael Dillon
Matthew McCormick
Samuel Ramsey
Jacob Scout Justin Scout
Kathryn Sterns Danna Szuba

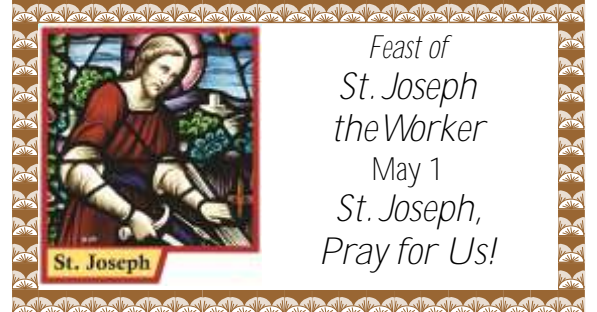
May the Holy Spirit fill you with
Wisdom, Understanding,
Knowledge, Counsel,
Piety, Fortitude,
Fear of the Lord



St. Anthony Offers
Congratulations to the newest
member of our Faith:
Joseph Benedict Ventura
son of Giancarlo and Julia (Peterson) Ventura
was Baptized
Easter Sunday, April 16, 2017
May God Bless All of You!



May is the month of the dedicated to
Our Blessed Mother.
Join us for May Crowning:
Monday, May 1 at 5:00pm
with Religious Ed;
Friday, May 12 at the 9:00am Mass.



Feast of
St. Joseph
the Worker
May 1
St. Joseph,
Pray for Us!

† MASS SCHEDULE †

Key to Abbreviations:

- EF - Extra-ordinary Form (Trad. Latin Mass)
- OF - Ordinary Form (New Rite; Novus Ordo)
- LM - Low Mass; MC - Missa Cantata (Sung)

Monday, May 1, 2017

8:30am † Dorothy Malik by Edward Malik
(OF-LM) (17th Anniversary of Death)

St. Joseph the Workman (1st C), Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Pt. of carpenters (New, Trad.)
St. Peregrine Laziosi (1345), Pr., R., Pt. of cancer sufferers (Hist.)

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

8:30am † Jack, Pat, & Peter Carey
(OF-LM) by Dan Carey on Behalf of Family

St. Athanasius (373), B., D. (New, Trad.)

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

8:30am † Bruno Strzelewicz
(OF-LM) by Dorothy Strzelewicz

† Leo Bischoff by JoAnn Long

Sts. Philip (61) & James the Less (62), Aps., Ms. (New)

Sts. Alexander, P., Eventius & Theodulus (119), Ms. (Trad.)

St. Juvenal (376), B. (Trad.)

Finding of the Holy Cross (Hist.)

Thursday, May 4, 2017

9:00am † Joyce Wintringham
(OF-LM) by Ken & Janet Goetz

St. Monica (387), W., mother of St. Augustine, Pt. of mothers (Trad.)

Feast of the Holy Shroud (Hist.)

St. Gothard (Godehard)(1038), B. (Hist.)

St. Florian (304), M., Pt. of Poland & firemen (Hist.)

First Friday, May 5, 2017

9:00am † Edward Louis Holup by
(OF-LM) Jeanne Holup on Behalf of the Family

7:00pm † Connie LaPointe
(OF-LM) by John Eicholtz

St. Pius V (1572), P., R. (Trad.)

St. Jutta (Judith) (9th C.), R., Pt. of Prussia (Hist.)

First Saturday, May 6, 2017

9:00am Fr. Brian's Intentions
(EF-MC)

Sunday Vigil (New, Trad.)

5:00pm † Martha Thoma

(OF-MC) **† Laura Myland**

by Dave & Yavonne Thoma

St. Evodius (64), Disciple, B., first to use the term "Christian" (Hist.)

Bls. Edward Jones & Anthony Middleton (1590), Pts., Ms. (Hist.)

St. John before the Latin Gate (95), Ap. (Hist.)

Sunday, May 7, 2017

Fourth Sunday of Easter,

Good Shepherd Sunday (New)

3rd Sunday after Easter (Trad.)

9:00am The People of St. Anthony
(OF-MC)

11:00am † Gene Henning

(OF-MC) by Cecelia Henning

St. Stanislaus of Cracow (1079), B., M., Pt. of Poland (Trad.)

Bl. Giesele (11th C.), W., mother of St. Emeric (Hist.)

Readings for the Week

Monday, May 1:

Acts 6:8-15; John 6:22-29 *or*
Genesis 1:26-2:3 *or*
Colossians 3:14-15,17,23-24;
Matthew 13:54-58

Tuesday, May 2:

Acts 7:51-8:1a; John 6:30-35

Wednesday, May 3:

1 Corinthians 15:1-8; John 14:6-14

Thursday, May 4:

Acts 8:26-40; John 6:44-51

First Friday, May 5:

Acts 9:1-20; John 6:52-59

First Saturday, May 6:

Acts 9:31-42; John 6:60-69

Sunday, May 7:

Acts 2:14a,36-41
1 Peter 2:20b-25
John 10:1-10



**The Holy Father's Monthly
Prayer Intention - May**

Christians in Africa

That Christians in Africa, in imitation of the Merciful Jesus, may give prophetic witness to reconciliation, justice, and peace.



Mass with the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick
Tuesday, May 9, 2017
at 7:00pm.

Please call the Parish Office
734-854-1143 to register to be anointed.
The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered before Mass 6-6:45pm.



Please keep in your prayers all our service men and women, especially those currently serving in Iraq or Afghanistan, especially
☆ Kenneth Lee Ziegler, Jr, Army
☆ Master Sgt., Gerald Hughes

Traveling Vocation Chalice

April 30 Mike Okragleski
May 7 Homero Ortiz
May 14 *Host Family Needed
May 21 *Host Family Needed



This Week's Calendar



Monday, May 1, 2017

8:30am - Mass
4:45-6pm - Religious Ed. - Grades 1-7
5pm - May Crowning

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

8:30am - Mass
7pm - Pastoral Council - Padua Hall

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

8:30am - Mass
9am - 7pm - Rummage Sale - Kenna Hall
6:15-7pm - Perpet. Help & Prayers
6:30-7:30pm - Confessions
7:30-10pm - K of C - Padua Hall

Thursday, May 4, 2017

9:00am - Mass
9am - 6pm - Rummage Sale - Kenna Hall

First Friday, May 5, 2017

9:00am - Mass
10am - 12pm - HFS - Padua Hall
7:00pm - Mass, with Exposition
and Benediction

First Saturday, May 6, 2017

9:00am - Mass; Followed by Holy Hour
(Carmelites)

10:15am - Worship Commission - Office

3:30 - 4:30pm - Confessions

5:00pm - Mass

Prayer Blankets - Narthex

Sunday, May 7, 2017

9:00am & 11:00am - Mass
Prayer Blankets - Narthex

Catholic Conversations

Our next meeting will be
Wednesday, May 17
We've had many great conversations,
there is always something new to learn.
All are welcome.

Pray without Ceasing

**The Offertory Story
April 23, 2017**

# Env. assigned: 289;	# Env. used: 102
Envelope total	\$ 4,247.00
Loose:	\$ 424.00
Children's Envelopes:	\$ 56.00
Total	\$ 4,727.00
Weekly Budget amount..	\$ 5,250.00
+Over/-Under Budget	\$ - 523.00
Year To Date +-	\$ +1,028.42
Other:	
Books, CD's	\$ 10.00
Candles	\$ 82.50
Donations	\$ 400.00
Total for Other:	\$ 492.50

Upcoming Events

- **Rummage Sale** - May 3 & 4
- **St. Luke Production "Faustina"** - May 12
- **K of C Breakfast** - May 14

From Monroe County Right to Life:

Please mark your calendars for the upcoming Fall Banquet hosted by Monroe County Right to Life, an affiliate of Right to Life of Michigan! The date is Thursday, October 26, 2017. This year's special keynote speaker will be Senator Patrick Colbeck, State Senator for Michigan's 7th District.

This year we are promoting the incentivized role of Table Captains where he or she will facilitate the purchase of tickets, by others, to fill a table of eight. There will be two levels of a very nice incentive for those willing to be Table Captains. To unveil this Table Captain opportunity we will host a meeting, an open discussion,

TODAY, Sunday, April 30, 2017

2:00pm to 3:00pm in Padua Hall

Please join us at this meeting to learn more.

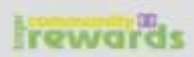
For more information please contact

Robert Burke at [517.215.8688](tel:517.215.8688) or

monroecountyrtl@gmail.com. For more information about the lifesaving work of

Right to Life if Michigan please visit

www.rtl.org.

 It's time to re-enroll your Kroger-Plus Cards to earn cash back for St. Anthony Church. For the first three quarters of last year we earned **\$772.40** just by shopping at Kroger and using the card. It's easy to enroll.....go to:

www.krogercommunityrewards.com

Our organization number 80230

If you need help, whether enrolling for the first time or re-enrolling, please call Linda or Michelle in the Parish Office. Even if you are not connected to the internet, we can fax in your application.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Spring Rummage Sale
 Thursday & Friday, May 11 & 12
 9AM to 6PM both days.
Friday is bag day!

....Let us Pray for....

Clark Alcock
 Helen Arends
 Maria Baer
 Gretchen Brautigan
 Toni Breininger
 Chris Brown
 Abby Bunting
 Don & Shirley Carter
 Katy Coburn
 Bonnie Cornprobst
 Lowell Cousino
 Amy Crumm
 Phillip Curtis
 Linda DeFalco
 Janie Delauter
 Jim Drake
 Larry Dusseau
 Cynthia Dvorsky
 Terry Dvorsky
 Albert Failer
 Scott Ferguson
 Jim Fuelling
 Stephanie Gelsey

Marcia Gilson
 Margaret Gotha
 Debbie Grycza
 Steve Haman
 Beth Huner
 JoAnn Huntwork
 Bill Hurley
 Rosemary Jacobs
 Michael Katafiasz
 Tom & Pauline Kreiger
 Bud LaPlante
 Martin LaVoy
 Larry Lemay
 Audrey Lawrence
 Robert Lehman
 Brenda Liwo
 Ron Liwo
 Linda Luchansky
 Sandy Maenle
 Frank & Shelly Maisano
 Edward Malik
 Bea Montri
 Raymond Mueller
 Steve Murzynski

Patty Muskat
 Bonnie Nolan
 Frank Parker
 Andrew Phillips
 Rachel Renn
 Kaye Ritzenthaler
 Adrian Sandelin
 Kathy Simms
 Larry Simms
 Steve Smith
 Ann Sommers
 Mazie Sue Springer
 Vic Stevens
 Tom Townsend
 Carole VanBrandt
 Teresa VanHove
 Virginia VanKirk
 Aaron Vyse
 Pat Webber
 Vicki White
 Mya Whitman
 Peter Williams
 Kathy Young

St. Anthony's

Spring Rummage Sale

Wednesday, May 3, 9am - 7pm

and

Thursday, May 4, 9am - 6pm

Thursday is \$2.00 Bag Day!



Faustina: Messenger of Divine Mercy

Friday, May 12, 2017

7:00pm, in St. Anthony Church

St. Anthony Catholic Church will be host

to the one-woman production of

Faustina: Messenger of Divine Mercy,

performed by Maria Vargo

of [Saint Luke Productions](#).

Suitable for ages 13 & up; Free-will Offering

- Please see the insert in today's bulletin for volunteer information -

For more Information

please call the Parish Office 734-854-1143,

or go to our web-site: stanthonytemperance.org.

Liturgical Assignments for May 6 & 7, 2017

Mass	Priest	Lector	Altar Servers
Sunday Vigil <i>Saturday, 5:00pm Mass</i>	Fr. Brian	J. Holup	M., P. & P. Dillon
Sunday, 9:00am Mass	Fr. Brian	K. Dressel	L. & P. Cousino
Sunday, 11:00am Mass	Fr. Brian	K. Shade	J. Clark; S. Holup





Faustina: Messenger of Divine Mercy
Friday, May 12, 2017
7:00pm, in St. Anthony Church
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Suitable for ages 13 & up; Free-will Offering

For more Information
 please call the Parish Office 734-854-1143,
 or go to our web-site: stanthonytemperance.org.

Volunteer sign-up for Friday, May 12, 2017

Church Set-up 12:30pm	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		Product set-up to be done at 1pm	1. 2. 3.
Greeters (6pm)	1. 2.		Product sales Narthex (post performance)	1. 2. 3.
Take-down	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		Hostess Post-performance refreshments	1. 2. 3.

The Monroe Vicariate Evangelization and Catechesis Committee is sponsoring an
Inner Healing Prayer Day
Saturday, May 6, 2017
10:00 am to 12:00 pm
St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church,
502 W. Front St., Monroe.

Inner Healing prayer is asking God to heal the root of emotional, mental or spiritual brokenness that causes the loss of inner peace. The members of the Prayer Team have been trained in Inner Healing Prayer. Joined with your prayer, they pray with you as Intercessors. They do not give counsel but stand with you, in prayer and in His desire to heal you.

There is no cost and no appointment is necessary. Typically, the prayer takes 5-10 minutes.

PRAYER FOR THE RETURN
 OF NON-PRACTICING CATHOLICS

Good Shepherd, You never cease to seek out the lost, to call home the stray, to comfort the frightened, and to bind up the wounded.

I ask You to bring the people I hold in my heart back to the practice of the Faith, and to remove all obstacles that prevent them from receiving Your abundant mercy, which flows sacramentally through the heart of Your holy Church.

Through the intercession of Mary, the Mother of God, their Guardian Angels, their Patron Saints, and the ever-prayerful St. Monica, may You pardon their sins and unshackle them from whatever hinders their freedom to come Home. For You, O Good Shepherd, have loved us to the end and offered Yourself to the Father for the salvation of all. Amen.

Prayers for the return of a non-practicing Catholic also should be accompanied by sacrificial and private acts of fasting, and almsgiving in their name.

**50/50
 corner**

Pasquale Diterlizzi & family have been selling 50/50 tickets at their shoe repair shop since the 50/50 drawing began. Seems like every other year they sell a winning 50/50 ticket.

In April, Epifani Jones became their latest winner. Her earnings were good for \$350.00 & Pasquale & crew collected the \$50.00 seller incentive.

2017 annuals are always available for purchase. As a reminder 1 annual will guarantee you 1 chance for every month in 2017, They are a great gift for the "hard to buy for" person. The 50/50 annual sales this year have been good. We now have sold 224 tickets. The cost for 1 annual is now \$8.00.

Annuals can be purchased in several ways: you can stop at the church office during the week or you can drop-by the 50/50 table in the Narthex on the 4th Sunday of the month, and they are also available at the K of C Breakfast Buffet.

**- NOTICE -
 MAY TICKET SELLERS**

Due to a printing error, the **single tickets** available last weekend for the May drawing are not valid; the wrong drawing date was printed. This does not affect any **Annual** tickets.

If you picked up any **single** tickets for the May 2017 drawing, please discard them. Corrected tickets may be picked up from the Parish Office during the week, or at the May Knights of Columbus Breakfast. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Brian Bischoff

Easter Flowers

Thank you again to all who so generously donated for Easter flowers for the church.



Each year, as the flowers fade and are removed from the church, we place them in the area between Padua Hall and the sacristy steps at the back of the church. Please feel free to take any potted plants home. The bulbs may be planted now; hyacinths, daffodils and tulips will come back next Spring; Easter lilies will bloom again this year.

Catholic Services Appeal 2017

Dear Friends in Christ,

Each year, all parishes in the Archdiocese of Detroit embark upon the CSA (Catholic Services Appeal) Drive. The CSA is a required collection taken up for the general operational expenses of the Archdiocese of Detroit. It helps to subsidize Catholic institutions that may not necessarily be connected to or funded by a particular parish. Among these special services are Campus Ministry, Telecommunications, Hospital and Prison Chaplaincies, Central Service Offices, which provide direct assistance to individual parishes, the Marriage Tribunal, and the like. Since the CSA provides for 62% of the operating budget of the Archdiocese, we are assessed or taxed a specific amount we are asked to meet. Our assessment is based upon many factors, including parish registration, Sunday collections, and financial status of the area within our parish boundaries.

The amount assessed to St. Anthony Parish this year is **\$37,318**. In order to reach our goal, the recommended pledge amount will be **\$250** from each family

For your convenience, pledge forms can be found at the bottom of this page. Please complete the form and designate the amount of your pledge and the payment plan you prefer and return to the Parish Office. Pledges may also be made by calling the Parish Office 734-854-1143; sending your pledge via email (stanthony@bex.net) or by stopping by the Parish Office during regular business hours.

Your pledge can be made in several ways: paid in full and returned with your pledge form; a down payment returned with your pledge form, with the balance divided into quarterly payments, or divided evenly among 9 monthly payments. Credit card and automatic withdrawal payments will also be accepted. If you wish to contribute this way, please indicate on the line below and a form will be sent to you.

New this year is the ability to donate online. Go to: <http://give.aodcsa.org> and select "St. Anthony Temperance" from the list. You do not have to set up an on-going account; simply choose the "Quick Give" option.

Please note: If you sign up to make payments on your pledge, the payment schedule will not begin until July 2017.

Please remember that we are required to make an accounting of all CSA cards for our Parish, so even if you are unable to pledge, we ask that you indicate that to the Parish Office as well.

I am grateful for your continued stewardship and prayers.

May God Be Blessed!

Father Brian Hurley
Pastor, St. Anthony Parish

CSA - 2017

Name _____

Address _____ Phone # _____

Amount of total Pledge \$ _____ Amount paid today \$ _____

Balance due \$ _____. Please bill me quarterly _____ or monthly (9 monthly payments) _____

____ I would like to pay by credit card (or) ____ I would like to pay by automatic withdrawal payments.

-- Please make checks payable to: **St. Anthony – CSA**

RUMMAGE SALE

ST. ANTHONY
KENNA HALL

4635 ST. ANTHONY ROAD
TEMPERANCE, MICHIGAN

WEDNESDAY, May 3, 2017

9am - 7pm

THURSDAY, May 4, 2017

9am - 6pm

Thursday is
\$2.00 BAG DAY!

St. Anthony's Spring
RUMMAGE SALE

-- May 3 & 4, 2017 --

Donations may be dropped off at Kenna Hall
through Sunday, April 30.

Please note, we do NOT accept:

- ◆ Computers
- ◆ TV's
- ◆ Infant Seats
- ◆ Encyclopedias

We will need:

- ◆ help before and during the sale.
- ◆ men to watch the doors Wednesday morning, May 3, from 9-11am.
- ◆ **baked goods**, especially cookies, cupcakes and brownies.
- ◆ **LOTS** of help taking down the sale beginning **after the sale on Thursday, May 4, and Friday morning, May 5, beginning at 9am.**

Any amount of time or donations will be appreciated.

Tax slips are available.

Any questions, or after-hours drop-offs,
call Carol Fuelling at 419-350-5900.



One In Seven by Joe Sixpack

John was spending the summer on his uncle's farm. As is the case with young boys, John found a lot of things he liked to do on the farm. On Sunday, though, he grumbled that he had to go so far with his uncle to Holy Mass.

His uncle said nothing of John's grumbling, but on market day he brought home seven large, juicy peaches from his own orchard and gave them to his nephew. Tom thanked him warmly, because he loved those juicy peaches. Later, when the uncle asked John if he could spare one of the seven peaches, the boy replied, "Sure, Uncle. Take as many as you want. After all, they came from your own orchard." He handed the bag to his uncle so he could help himself.

"I see you're more generous to me than you are to the good God who gave us these peaches," said the uncle.

"What do you mean?" John asked.

"You don't begrudge me a share of the fruit I've given you, yet when God has given you seven days in the week, you grumble at sparing a part of one day in seven which God gave you to worship and thank Him."

John never complained again.

Time is one of the many things God gives most of us in abundance. There are one hundred twenty-eight hours in a week that He gives us, and that is time most of us enjoy and prosper in. I wonder, though, just how much we appreciate all those hours each week. If you are forty years old, God has given you over 266,000 hours to live, love and enjoy life. How many of those hours have been given back to Him? Assuming you have attended Mass every Sunday of your life, you have only given back to Him 2,000 hours. Seems a bit disproportionate, doesn't it? Despite the seeming disproportion, God still only asks for one of those hours each week for Holy Mass...and the several extra hours throughout the year for Holy Days of Obligation.

How is that hour each week spent? Are we like John and grumble at the obligation of giving God that hour for Mass, or do we offer it to him freely and joyfully? When at church for Mass, do we spend the time before Mass preparing for the Holy Sacrifice by being silent before the Tabernacle, contrite for our sins and thanking Him for His sacrifice and all the good He has given us, or do we allow ourselves to be distracted and think about just about everything except Him and His sacrifice?

We Catholics have all the motions down pat, but I wonder whether we even know what the motions are all about. I see the people coming into church and at least make an attempt to genuflect before going into a pew, but I think most don't even know why they genuflect. I've been to many a parish church where the Tabernacle has been moved off to the side, yet when people enter the church they genuflect toward the altar. That tells me they don't know why they're genuflecting, because we are supposed to be genuflecting to His Majesty the King of Creation in the Tabernacle as a sign of homage, love and respect.

Then I observe most Catholics kneeling before sitting in the pew. Why are they doing that? Well, they're supposed to be praying in preparation for Holy Mass, as they are about to witness a representation of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. But what they're supposed to be doing and what many of them actually doing appear to be two different things. I see them looking around, or giving a short wave and smile to someone else, or fidgeting with their hair... And when I see these things I realize I, too, am being guilty of not giving myself entirely to God as I should be or I wouldn't be noticing these things.

I'm afraid most of us have come to see going to Mass as one of our social events of the week instead of what it is—the worship of our Creator in the way He demands to be worshipped. I don't go to the vigil Mass on Saturday evening, as I don't need to use that privilege because I'm able to attend Sunday Mass, but I do go before Mass to confession. As I sit there in the pew making my final preparation for a good confession, I'm usually distracted by all the talking on the part of others who are there for the vigil Mass. Folks, we don't go to Mass to socialize; we go to Mass to worship God...and no other reason. There's nothing wrong with socializing, but if you want to socialize, do so outside before or after Mass—not when you're supposed to be preparing for Mass and Communion. If you won't maintain silence for the sake of your own soul, at least be courteous enough to do so for those others who do want to make a good preparation for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

During the Sign of Peace, everyone seems to want to take even that brief few seconds to socialize. Why? Are we that starved for the attention of others? Have we so forgotten or perverted our notion of what the Mass is all about that we treat it like it's just another social event? During the Sign of Peace, *Jesus is already on the altar! Our focus is supposed to be on Him! That's why we are supposed to only greet the person on each side of us with a blessing of peace. It's an abuse of our participation in the Mass and a terribly disrespectful act toward Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist on the altar to hug, kiss, wave, and otherwise take our attention away from Jesus who is present on the altar in His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the consecrated Host and Blood in the chalice.* These abuses are precisely why many priests use their legitimate option to not allow the Sign of Peace at all.

The worst abuse, though, is people leaving immediately after Communion. If you're attending a weekday Mass, it only takes another five minutes before Mass is over. For Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, there are only another ten minutes required of us before the Mass ends. Are we so selfish, thoughtless and disrespectful that we can't afford to give God another ten minutes? This is what He demands, but we still choose to offend Him by leaving early.

Did you know that it is a mortal sin to not attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation without a sufficient reason? And going on a weekend trip to visit relatives or vacation ¹ or picnic or go fishing are not sufficient reasons. And did you know that *to leave before the final blessing means you have not fulfilled your Mass obligation? It's true! So not only is it gravely disrespectful to the our Eucharistic Lord, but it is a mortal sin to leave Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation before Mass has ended.* This not only means a mortal sin is committed by leaving Mass early, because you fail to fulfill your obligation to participate in the Mass, but all subsequent Communion add the *mortal sin of sacrilege!*

Friends, it's time to get serious about our faith...especially when it comes to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and Holy Communion. We've had it too good for too long in America, and it's caused us to become lax in the practice of our holy and ancient faith. Attending the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass isn't a social event. Assisting at Mass is a moral obligation that means the difference between eternity in heaven and eternity in hell. Jesus is Mercy, but He is also Justice and Truth, so don't make the mistake of making Him the Warm Fuzzy who will overlook the laxity we commonly practice. Let's remember that our laxity—our lukewarmness—was condemned by Jesus: "So because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, *I will spew you out of my mouth*" (Revelation 3:16). We must serve Him as He demands, because this is What We Believe...Why We Believe It.

Got questions or comments? Go to JoeSixpackAnswers.com to ask, comment or vent.

¹ Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2181