

MASS SCHEDULE

PASTOR'S NOTES

Rosary @ 8:35AM Monday – Friday

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

9:00 AM ANN: William Kwiek/Family

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

6:45 AM Florence Murphy/Bob McDonald

9:00 AM ANN: Ann Marie Verosek/Family

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

6:45 AM (Living) Ralph Courchaine/
Dennis & Addie Ray Dole

9:00 AM Roger Vierra/Jack & Inez O'Brien

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

6:45 AM Edward Hamilton/Colleen & Jack Mancuso

9:00 AM Peter Vanelli/Carmella Colabufo

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

6:45 AM Patricia Welch/Maria & Rich Filippi

9:00 AM ANN: Spicciati Francesco/
Antonio Ciarmello

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

8:00 AM 30 DAY: Marie Patterson/
Steve & Debbie Germano

5:00 PM ANN: Beverly Lawless/Family

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

7:30 AM James Peterson/Mike & Barb Pauley &
Marie Brennan

8:45 AM Julie Assaf/Joe & Katie Assaf

10:30 AM Shirley Stevenson/
Michael & Colleen Hedges

12:15 PM Wm. Prindle, Jr./Anne Schrank

4:00 PM Willis & Gladys Clement/Mary Beth Allen

READINGS – SEPTEMBER 3 & 4:

First Reading: Wisdom 9:13-18b

Second Reading: Philemon 9-10, 12-17

Gospel: Luke 14:25-33

WEEKLY CONTRIBUTIONS:

Regular Collection 8/27 & 28:	\$17,154.57
Electronic Giving	\$ 1,272.30
TOTAL	\$18,426.87
Last Year	\$18,440.43

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER
SCHEDULE**

A new schedule will be prepared September 19. Please submit any changes as soon as possible to Debbie at the parish office – 488-3139 ext. 13 or debbie@holyfamilysyr.org.

Dear Friends,

Happy Labor Day! I hope that all of us are able to find a few moments of rest from our labors on this Labor Day. Since, this marks the unofficial end of summer, I pray we can all enjoy these last weeks of sunshine and warmth!

On Wednesday, September 7, Bishop Cunningham will be here for the 9:00 AM opening school Mass of the Holy Spirit. All are welcome to attend. It is always a blessing to have our Bishop at our parish. I am so happy he can be with us as we start off another school year. Please come and help to start a new school year out with Mass and prayer.

Lastly, this weekend our Church has a new saint – Mother Teresa. Many of us remember her well and her tremendous service to God and those most in need. Let's seek the intercession of St. Teresa of Calcutta for all of our needs!

Peace,
Fr. Manno

Monday, September 4, 2016 – Labor Day

Just a reminder that we reduce our Mass schedule to one Mass for Monday, September 4, 2016 – Labor Day. Therefore, **there will not** be a 6:45 AM Mass. There will be one Mass on Labor Day at 9:00 AM. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

PLEASE NOTE: The Parish Office will be closed Monday, Labor Day!

Counseling Services available at Holy Family

In collaboration with Catholic Charities of Onondaga County, Holy Family is able to provide an on-site counselor once each week. Requests for services (and for more information) can be made directly by calling Ellen Ketchum, LCSW at (315)362-7568 or Mary McGrath, LMFT at (315)362-7565. These services are provided at a reduced fee.

LITURGY UPDATE

Fr. Jason will preach September 10 & 11.
Fr. Manno will baptize September 11.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

ATTENTION PARISHIONERS: We will print the "Please Pray For List" on a month-to-month basis. If you would like your loved one on the list, please call the parish office. The name will stay on for one month. You must call each month to have the name put back on the list.

Marie Wing, Betty Sabene, Sandy Dalton, Ed Campagna, Hank Smith, Dr. Joseph & Joan Thornton, James Spinoso, Alison McCauley, Cheryl Davis, Nicole Canavan, Christopher Piotrowski, John Graham, Steve Morton, Karen Pologa, John Krupka, Howie Moore, Barbara Poore, Emily Cawthon, Steve Norton, James Kuglics, Kimberly K., Mary Kehn, Steve Gaffney, Margaret (Peg) Halton, Carol Judge, Mary Jo Smith, Sally Doyle Wilson, Lou Wassell, Helen Ann Lynch, Jackie Simmons, George Riley, Michael Mastry, Marylou Motto, William "Bo" Bochicchio, Tatum Bulger, Juliana Canulla, Sophie Barone, Gabe, M. Morton, Karen Conte, Chris Crandall, Joan Ibas, David Campbell, Helen, Paul Campbell, Marlene Claps, Randy, Sr. Anna Maria Bilotta, Joanne Dooley, Emma Barnaard, Yvonne Cesta.

NOTE: Due to HIPPA laws, hospitals are not allowed to give names of patients to us. Please notify the parish office if you have a loved one in the hospital or a nursing home who would like a visit from a priest or a deacon.

On October 2nd Holy Family Church will be the location of the 2016 Life Chain event for the Western Region. This will be a quiet prayerful line of people on both sides of Genesee street in front of Holy Family Church. Last year over 1500 cities held similar events. The Life Chain will start at 1:30 and end at 3:00. Please give 90 minutes of your time to take a positive stand to end abortion.

ATTENTION PARISHIONERS:
The Pool Store is approaching its' busy time with people closing their pools. Please respect their business and **DO NOT** park in their parking lot for Mass.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

3:00 PM Divine Mercy Novena – Church

TUESDAY, September 6

3:00 PM Divine Mercy Novena – Church

7:00 PM Baptism Class - Office

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

9:30 AM Coffee Hour – Church Hall

3:00 PM Divine Mercy Novena – Church

6:30 PM Adult Faith Formation Meeting - #1

7:00 PM Liturgical Minister Training - Church

7:00 PM Charismatic Prayer Group – MPR

8:00 PM AA – Cafeteria

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

3:00 PM Divine Mercy Novena – Church

5:30 PM Pray-it-Off – Church Hall

6:30 PM Pastoral Council Meeting

6:30 PM Hospitality Committee – MPR

7:00 PM Catholic Couples Fellowship - Church

7:00 PM Daughters in Adoration – Chapel

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

1:00 PM Eucharistic League &
Nocturnal Adoration - Chapel

3:00 PM Divine Mercy Novena – Church

6:30 PM PTO Ice Cream Social – Parking Lot

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

7:00 AM Men’s Prayer Group – MPR

3:00 PM Divine Mercy Novena- Church

3:30 PM Confessions – Church

6:00 PM “Where is God in My Life” – Shrine

FOOD COLLECTION WEEKEND

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

8:45 Mass – Children’s Liturgy of the Word –
Church Hall

1:30 PM Baptisms - Church

3:00 PM Divine Mercy Novena – Church

5:00 PM Life Teen –Church Hall

6:00 PM Prayer Service for Peace - Grotto

BEREAVEMENT
Let God be God. Therein lies the secret to the
“peace that transcends understanding”.
MAY THEY REST IN PEACE
Robert Kelly, Angie Williams

~ **FLU SHOTS** available at Coffee Hour on
September 7, 2016 from 10:00am – 11:00am



HOLY FAMILY OUTREACH

September 2016

7th – Coffee Hour – Flu Clinic 10 – 11AM

“Hard as Nails Intro”

8th – Sandwich making @ 1:00pm

10th & 11th – Food Collection Weekend

12th – Food Sorting

14th – Senior Homebound Deliveries

19th – Health Ministry @ 6:30pm

21st – Young at Heart

Pantry items needed: beef stew, hash, spaghetti sauce, paper towels and toilet paper.

NEEDED: Soup Supper Ministry – We need two people to coordinate the Ash Wednesday Soup Supper Ministry. Project involves about two weeks of time. Please call Bridget at Parish Office.

CHILDREN’S LITURGY OF THE WORD

Children’s Liturgy of the Word is available at the 8:45AM mass every week. This is open to children ages 3 and up; children under 3 with a parents are always welcome too. If you have questions or are interested in volunteering, please contact Kristin Shanahan or Olivia Colabufo.

WHERE IS GOD IN MY LIFE?

Saturday, September 10, 2016

6:00 PM

BBQ at the Grotto

Bring your own lawn chair.

Short talks and inspiring music and Sundaes.

Please RSVP – 488-3139 or srkathys@gmail.com.

REMINDER

FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION

SEPTEMBER 9

First Friday Adoration for September will be held on September 9 due to the Labor Day Holiday.

Eucharistic League hours are from 1PM – 9PM Friday – call 468-2828.

Nocturnal Adoration hours are from 9PM Friday to 8AM Saturday, call 638-5416.

Everyone is welcome and new members are always

needed. Please consider joining this Adoration Ministry.

BAPTISM CLASS

NEXT BAPTISM CLASS

TUESDAY, September 6, 2016

FROM 7 PM to 8:15 PM

PASTORAL CARE OFFICE:

Sr. Caryn Haas, D.S.M.P. Please call: 315-488-3139, ext. 23 to make arrangements for the baptism of your child. **WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT COUPLES ATTEND THE BAPTISMAL CLASS BEFORE THE BABY IS BORN.** Normally, baptisms are the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Mary brings us to Jesus. Recite your daily rosary with constancy and you will eventually find yourself before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, fulfilling to a higher degree the command to love God and achieving that for which we were created. The Adoration Chapel is open to all who wish to spend time in adoration of Jesus. We encourage adorers to select a specific hour in our 24/7 weekly ministry. Call Tom Colabufo at 487-8377.

HOSPITALITY MINISTRY NOTES

Welcome Back! The Hospitality Ministry welcomes back the teachers, students and staff of Holy Family School!

Are you new to our Parish? Please join us on Sunday, September 11, 2016 after the 8:45 a.m. Mass for **Coffee with the Pastor**. Come and meet our Pastor, Father John and other ministry leaders in our Parish while enjoying coffee and snacks.

9/11 Memorial—We all remember the tragedy that unfolded 15 years ago on 9/11. We will have memorial crosses in the Gathering Space **September 10 and 11** for you to place a red, white or blue ribbon as our community expression for peace.

Hospitality Ministry will meet on **Thursday, September 8 at 6:30 p.m.** in the Multi-Purpose Room.

Syracuse Pilgrimage—Saturday, October 22, 2016—See Bulletin Insert The Syracuse Diocese is very blessed with many sacred and beautiful sites! Plus, we have a Memorial to our very own Saint, Mother Marianne Cope and the Cathedral has a Holy Door for us to visit! What better way to see these sites than with your Holy Family! Join us as we take a tour bus on Saturday, October 22 to a personal tour of Assumption Church, The St. Mother Marianne Cope Museum, The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and the Holy Door. We will conclude our day with lunch at Highland Forest overlooking the Onondaga Valley. Call Shelly Terzolo at 403-1019 for more information or to

reserve your seat! \$40.00 per person includes admissions, bus, lunch.



Life Teen: Leading teens closer to Christ

Welcomes all students in grades 9-12

Sundays, Mass at 4pm, Life Night 5-7 pm, Church Hall.

chris@holyyouth.com or call 382-7883

Text @mrspilka to 81010 to receive updates and reminders of what is going on with our Life Teen youth program.

9/4: No Life Teen – Enjoy Labor Day weekend with family!

9/11: Holy Family Prayer Service for Peace

9/18: Life Teen Kick Off!

9/25: Evening on Prayer

9/30: Set up for Taste of Holy Family

10/1: Taste of Holy Family, 6-9PM

~ Parents and teens please sign up with Chris to volunteer for setting up, working the Taste of Holy Family event, and/or break down after. Many hands make light work!



EDGE – Welcomes all 7th & 8th Grade students

Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but be an example for the believers in your speech, your conduct, your love, faith, and purity.
- 1Timothy 4:12

For more information, contact Vince and Patty D'Angelo at 488-5884 or vince@holyyouth.com

9/18: Edge Kick Off – 1:30 – 3PM. There will be inflatables and an ice cream truck. Come join the fun and bring a friend!

Have you been looking for a ministry to get involved with? We are expanding our program this fall and now would be a great time to join our team. Time commitments are low, but the payoff is huge! Please contact Vince and Patty D'Angelo at vince@holyyouth.com or through the Faith Formation Office if you are interested, 488-5884.

FAITH FORMATION DATES & EVENTS

Our 2016/2017 Fall/Spring Faith Formation calendar and registration forms are now available! Visit us at holyyouth.com to download registration/permission forms or pick one up in the Faith Formation Office.

REGISTER EARLY! - CLASSES BEGIN SUNDAY 9/25 & MONDAY 9/26

The following changes will be made in the upcoming year to improve Faith Formation:

- **Grades K, 1, 3, 4, 5 & 6:** will be offered on Sundays from 10-11:15am and Mondays from 6:15-7:30pm.
- **Grade 2 Faith Formation:** will be offered **only** on Monday nights from 6:15-7:30pm. The sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion are taught during Grade 2 and it is necessary that your child is thoroughly prepared. It is highly recommended that if you have a child in Grade 1 that they attend Faith Formation in order to help prepare them for the upcoming Grade 2 Sacramental Preparation year.
- **Grade 7 & 8 Faith Formation:** will be offered on Monday nights **only** in the Church Hall from 6:15-7:30pm. This will be taught using the EDGE ministry curriculum.
- **Confirmation 1** will continue on Sundays from 10-11:30am and **Confirmation 2** will continue on Sundays from 11:45am-1:15pm. There will be 3 required masses for C1 and C2 to attend as a group and this is during a class time, with C1 attending mass at 10:30 and C2 attending at the 12:15 mass. If you have a child who attends parochial high school, it is required that they attend the **second** year of Confirmation but, it is not mandatory that they attend Confirmation 1. (Though it is highly recommended that your child does attend).

Faith Formation Teacher Volunteers

If you are a returning Faith Formation teacher or someone who is just feeling the tug on your heart to share the Catholic Faith with our students, please fill out and return a Volunteer Form to the Faith Formation office. Thank you!

5466 to sign up. DEADLINE: Friday, September 23rd.

MUSIC MINISTRY

This Weekend (September 3 & 4):

5:00 PM Gabrielle Giacobelli, Trudy Butler
 8:45 AM Mary Kate Krawczyk, Tony Alvaro
 10:30 AM Mary Kate Krawczyk, Tony Alvaro
 12:15 PM Mary Kate Krawczyk, Trudy Butler
 4:00 PM Holy Family Praise & Worship Band

Next Weekend (September 10 & 11):

5:00 PM Gabrielle Giacobelli, Trudy Butler
 8:45 AM Mikell DiGiorgio, Tony Alvaro
 10:30 AM Mikell DiGiorgio, Tony Alvaro
 12:15 PM Mikell DiGiorgio, Trudy Butler
 4:00 PM Holy Family Praise & Worship Band

ADULT HOUR

First Seasonal Rehearsal: Wednesday, Sept. 14 @ 7PM in the choir room.

First Seasonal Mass: Sunday, Sept. 25 @ 10:30AM

JOYFUL SOUND

First Seasonal Rehearsal: Sat. Oct. 1 @ 4:15PM in the choir room.

First Seasonal Mass: Saturday, Oct. 1st @ 5PM



Registration for School Year 2016-2017

Holy Family School is presently accepting registrations for the next school year 2016-2017 for grades Nursery, PreK & Kindergarten through Grade 6. Forms are available at the school office.

LOSE 10 POUNDS BY CHRISTMAS

Learn how eating less, moving more and praying can help by joining **Pray it Off** - a FREE one of a kind Catholic Weight Loss Group. 3-Month Commitment. September 8th through December 8th, 2016. Meets every Thursday 6 - 7PM. MEN, women and teenagers are welcome. \$5.00 Registration Fee. Call Ellen M. McCauley @ 447-4676 before September 4th to join or with questions.

Q: Why was the choir locked in the choir room?

A: They forgot there was a key change!

Our wonderful choirs begin a new season this month. Please start praying about joining our music ministry. We need new members and hope that you will consider giving back to our parish community in this exciting and rewarding way. No experience necessary. Contact Rob Morey @ 487-1737 for more info.

SOCIAL MEDIA & HOLY FAMILY

LIKE us on Facebook:

Facebook.com/HolyFamilyChurchSyracuse

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER: @HolyFamSy

Holy Family 9/11 Prayer Service for Peace

Our Life Teen ministry will be sponsoring a Holy Family Prayer Service for Peace next Sunday, 9/11, at 6:00pm in the grotto. All are welcome to attend this beautiful candlelit vigil for peace. Families are encouraged to attend.

ATTENTION ALL SENIORS 55+

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

POT LUCK SUPPER

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2016

HOLY FAMILY CHURCH HALL - 6PM

Please call Donna @ 487-0288 or Esther @ 487-

RCIA

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) begins September 14th. Please join us at 7:00 on Wednesdays, in the parish offices.

The RCIA process begins the journey of faith that leads to the fulfillment of our Lord's promises and is for all adults who:

1. Have never received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, or Jesus in the Eucharist and desire to, or;
2. Have been baptized in a non-Catholic faith tradition but desire full communion in the Roman Catholic Church upon receiving Confirmation and Jesus in the Eucharist, or;
3. Are already baptized Catholic and still need to receive the sacraments of Confirmation and/or Eucharist, or;
4. Are already Catholic or non-Catholic Christians and simply desire to learn more about the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For more information, please contact the parish office or RCIA Director Joe Assaf at 672-3974.

GIFT BEARERS**September 10 & 11**

5:00 PM ~ Family

8:45 AM ~ Family

10:30 AM – Kathleen O'Connor

Parishioners: If you have an intention for a loved one coming up at a weekend Mass and would like to bring up the gifts, call Esther @ 487-5466.

HOLY FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

WHERE: Holy Family Church Hall

WHAT: Gospel of John

WHEN: Wednesdays, 6:30 – 8PM

October 5, 2016 – May 24, 2017

COST: \$20

Study the gospel in a whole new way!

Understand our Catholic Faith better

Leads to a deeper relationship with Jesus

Gives new meaning to our worship.

CONTACT: Sr. Kathy Stark

srkathys@gmail.com

A sample of the Bible Study and registration forms are available in the Church gathering space.

GOLF LEAGUE**August 29, 2016 ~**

It was a beautiful night for golf on the last night of the year. Tim Donigan's team (Cory Duthoy, Fr. Phil, Steve Kent (sub for Jack Carter) won the championship round against Chris Menge's team (Joe Teich, Chuck Freeland, Tyler Mead) 22 1/2 to 17/1/2. The rest of the league played in a Hi-Lo Tournament with Chauncey Ball & Chris Rockwood as the winners. Skin winners were Rick Bailey – bird on 12, John Cook – par on 14 and Tim Donigan – par on 17.

The end of the year tournament will be played September 12th with a 12 noon tee off time. This is a Captain & Mate Format. The banquet will be at the Elk's Club: cocktails - 6:30PM; dinner at 7PM. Don't forget to bring a door prize (\$10 - \$15).

WELCOME NEW CHRISTIANS:

Gracelyn Rose Jackson child of

Paul & Katelyn Jackson

Ivan William Lutters child of

Erik & Kari Lutters

Leo Francis Merante child of

Edward & Carolyn Merante

CATHOLIC COUPLES FELLOWSHIP!

Our first meeting for Catholic Couples Fellowship is this Thursday at 7:00pm in the Church. Please come with your special someone to this powerful novena to the Holy Family.

TASTE OF HOLY FAMILY

With autumn knocking on our front door we need to kick off this season in the best way possible...by eating some food! The Taste of Holy Family gives us an opportunity to come together as a community and enjoy all of the foods that our parish community has to offer! The evening will begin with a tasting competition highlighting dishes divided up into 4 different food categories. Your participation is essential because you are the ones that decide the winner! The night will also consist of raffles, large auctions and more! So please join us for this wonderful event on October 1st, 6 – 9 PM at the Holy Family cafeteria! This event serves as the largest fundraiser for the Life Teen Youth Ministry Program and provides funding for 2 Life teen winter retreats!

Cooks Needed – This is a shout out to all Emeril Lagasses! We can't have the Taste of Holy Family without some awesome cooks! This year our theme is "Autumn Dishes". Categories are: **Side Dishes, Entrees, Desserts** and **Appetizers**. Registration forms may be downloaded at holyfamilysyr.org. or contact our Faith Formation Office at 488-5884.

Raffle/Auction Items Needed – We are accepting gift items, gift baskets and gift cards to be raffled or auctioned off at the Taste of Holy Family. You may drop off at the Parish Office or Faith Formation Office or call our office at 488-5884 and we will pick up from your business or home.

COATS, COATS, COATS IN ANY COLOR NEEDED!!! Collection – Sept. 24th & 25th

Winter is coming and the homeless need coats.

Let's show our brothers and sisters some love.

Homeless are the people in the streets, mother

and children in temporary shelters, your friend,

your brother, your sister. You can see God in all

of their faces. Please launder your donations,

even wool coats or purchase new...it is up to you.

Any questions please call Jeannine Cilani 468-

2623.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:**SEPTEMBER 10 & 11:**

- 5:00 PM Susan Brennan, Charles Cooney,
Susan Cutri, Michael Dendis,
Susan LaFex, Mary Lou Lake,
Andrea Marshall, Barb Mercurio,
Alexander Rinaldi, Robert Singer,
Kathleen Wheeler
- 7:30 AM John Brusa, John Brusa III,
Bill Ganey, Jean Moth,
Kathy Rudy, Robert Steves,
Sharon Williams
- 8:45AM Andy Buttner, Patty Costello,
Joseph & Margaret Cerio, Barb Parkes,
Dolores Grace, Phillip Grome,
Kathlene Hunter, Valerie James,
Ronnie Schmidt, Kathy Spencer,
- 10:30AM Chauncey & Arlene Ball,
Angelica Conway, Shelly Dodge,
Mary Ellen Koegel, Tom Maier,
Stephanie Melnyczyk, Donald Thome,
Fran & Pam Stepien, Andrew Villa
- 12:15PM Joseph Antonio, Andrew Bowman,
Richard Brostek, Doreen Plony,
Lisa Posenauer, Jodi Smolen
- 4:00PM Jackie Allen, Michael Assaf,
Mary Ellen Byrne, Jessica Caputo,
Jacob Dippold, Elizabeth Garn,
Joe Guadagnolo, Scott Harris
Jenifer Scott, Chris Spilka, Ed Terzolo

LECTORS – SEPTEMBER 10 & 11:

- 5:00 PM Pat Maguire, Donna Marshall
7:30 AM Janice Bader, Paula Meseroll
8:45 AM Geoff Parkes, Chelsea Parkes
10:30 AM Donald Hulchanski, Trina Obrist
12:15 PM Pamela Tobin, Lisa Vignogna
4:00 PM Juanita Williams, Shelly Terzolo

ALTAR SERVERS – SEPTEMBER 10 & 11:

- 5:00 PM Peter & Bill Assaf,
Megan & Emily O'Reilly
7:30 AM Sean Mitchell, Charles O'Malley,
Roberto & Antonio Shtari
8:45 AM Olivia Grome, Luke Infanti,
John Michael & Paul Owens
10:30 AM Benedict, John Paul, Stephen,
Christopher & Thomas, Maier
12:15 PM Isaiah Apps, Connor Chawgo,
Michael Desimone, Emily Greeley
4:00 PM Ada Frye, Anthony Orendorf,
Sophia & Simon Martone

A Note from Father Jason

In the Roman breviary, there is a curious prayer that comes up from time to time that states: "Make, we beseech Thee, all bishops and pastors diligently to preach Thy holy word, and the people to obediently follow the same, that they may receive the crown of everlasting glory."

This prayer always strikes me when I come across it because it speaks to a deep truth about the relationship between a pastor and his flock. The truth is this: we pray that a pastor may lead with all the gifts that he possesses and all the energy that may be available to him, but none of his efforts, no matter how fervent, will ever be received if the flock does not possess an obedient heart. The pastor has the responsibility of leading his flock to the greener pastures where they will be well fed and grow into a stronger and more mature community of faith. The truth about sheep is that they may believe they have already arrived at the greener pastures, mistaking their current ground as the greatest that can be achieved. But the pastor, who is called to find the places where the green is greener, has the duty to challenge the flock to move from the places they have grown accustomed to. Just as if a mother or father who never challenged their children would be considered an irresponsible parent, so too a pastor who never challenged his community would be an irresponsible priest. For any place where we may find nourishment will eventually be depleted after some time; the grass will no longer nourish because it has simply dried up. We can continue to linger in one place, but this comes at the cost of possibly creating a spiritual standstill both individually and as a community.

So do we pray for our pastor as much as we pray that we may have an obedient heart? We, as the flock, may be upset at times when we are asked to move beyond our conceptions of what our reality should look like. But if we have obedient hearts, as the Lord desires us to have, then we will be led to places that are beyond our wildest imaginings. Obedience requires trust. It also requires humility, that just as much as we may claim the greatest love for our parish, we also admit that we may not perfectly understand all that may be at play. Humility and trust are the bulwark of an obedient heart. This is my personal resolve for this upcoming year, obedience founded on humility and trust. I pray that you will join me in prayer to be led as well as to lead, for the salvation of my own soul, for the salvation of the souls to whom I serve, to the greater glory of God. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, pray for us.

