

Most Holy Trinity

Christmas 2015



**Christ is born!
Let us adore Him!**



On behalf of our parish staff I want to extend to you a Holy and Joyful Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

Fr. Dennis Howard
Pastor

Merry Christmas!

The past few years the parish has given away different books and CDs as gifts for all our visitors and parishioners here during the holidays. This year we are excited to give away Matthew Kelly's brand new book, *Rediscover Jesus*. The back cover of the book introduces it well:

At a time when so many people are spiritually disillusioned and searching for ways to live, love, work, and play that nurture the soul rather than destroy it...Rediscover Jesus is a profound invitation to seek deeply personal answers to our deeply personal questions. Each page seems to effortlessly reach into every aspect our lives, providing spiritual wisdom and practical insights that help us to know both Jesus and ourselves in a new way.

In addition to just giving you a copy of the book, we want to also invite you to come share your thoughts about the book with others. Over the next six weeks a group will be meeting three times (Jan. 14th, Jan. 28th, and Feb. 11th) at 7:00pm in the Fr. Ray Youth Center.

More details about the book study will be given to you with the book after Mass and in the bulletin for the next few weeks.

Christ's Peace,

Paul

I have asked Jerry & Mary Lee Klein so share their story with us.

God bless,

Fr. Dennis



After years of hearing and seeing how the Holy Spirit touched the lives of so many of our parish youth through Steubenville, youth retreats, and work camps, we decided to make the first Parish Adult Retreat last September.

We were excited when we first signed up. Like many things in life, we looked forward to something new but as the time drew near we started to have doubts about going. The week prior to the retreat we received an e-mail encouraging all the attendees to pray for the success of the retreat and to clear your minds and hearts of everyday worries and just enjoy the experience of the upcoming weekend. With so many responsibilities over the summer of caring for elderly parents and the death of my mother we felt overwhelmed when we received that e-

mail. Immediately thinking how can we clear our minds when there was so much going on in our lives right now. We both felt a huge tug in the pit of our stomachs at holding us back from going. Luckily, deep in our hearts we knew that if we just got there, the Lord would take care of the rest.

The biggest drawback for us in making the weekend was the distance we would have to travel and the fact that we had to spend two nights away from home and not knowing if we would have to share a room, or worse yet, a bathroom with another couple. During our drive there I told Jerry that we were going to turn right around and come home if I didn't at least have my own bathroom. Satan was doing everything in his power to keep us from experiencing a beautiful weekend and an opportunity to draw closer to the Lord. Our fears were relieved upon entering the grounds of the retreat center. A couple young men from our parish greeted us and showed us to our own room with our own bathroom.

Friday evening started with prayers in a beautiful small chapel in the woods. Looking around and seeing everyone devotedly praying together was gratifying. During prayer the uncertainty of the weekend lifted and we started to realize that this just might be a great weekend after all. Our fears

seemed to have disappeared. Settling into a comfortable meeting room, we listened to Fr. Dennis give his testimony. That touched a chord within us. We realized that no matter who we are, we cannot escape trials in our lives. It is how we deal with these trials that make us winners or losers. We can take that trial and let ourselves draw closer to the Lord, or we can let the trial get the best of us and lose out and prevent ourselves from receiving God's grace.

Saturday was the highlight. Everyone was starting to get comfortable with each other. During meal time, prayer time, and in the meeting room, we decided to sit by someone new in order for us to talk with everyone. This was amazing because it showed how we were a true "Parish Family." Also speaking with many people throughout the weekend we realized that many of us have the same problems and concerns.

Saturday was a full day of testimonies and videos that spoke to both Jerry and I in a profound way. Adam talked about times when we just want to quit because we are tired or discouraged with something the Lord is asking of us to do. It's at those times that the Lord is calling us the most to go out on the limb to experience His love and mercy. We compared this going out on the limb to our recent doubt and fear of going on this retreat. As mentioned earlier we did not want to spend the nights away from home but it became obvious to us the importance of spending the nights. We didn't have to worry about driving home Friday and Saturday evening. We could stay and visit with others or go back to our rooms. During the night I woke up both nights thinking about something that was talked about and how it affected me. It was so peaceful in the silence and darkness of our room to pray and listen to what the Lord wanted me to hear.

We watched a video called "God's Chisel". We both were overwhelmed with emotions during this video. God made us all good in the beginning. He created us to be His masterpiece. But because of our many sins we tear down this image. We have both struggled with anger and forgiveness at different times in our lives. It doesn't always feel good going back many times to ask for God's love and mercy for the same wrongs that we do in our lives. Sometimes it really hurts to chisel away sin but after the hurt is gone we will feel God's love and mercy and freedom from our sins. We know we are no way God's perfect masterpiece. But through God's great mercy, love, and patience we can keep chiseling away and hope that once again we will return to the masterpiece which God created us to be.

Saturday evening was Eucharistic Adoration and we could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit and it was so powerful and beautiful. Many of us did not want to leave at the end because of the overwhelming presence of the Holy Spirit.

Sunday, on our drive home we talked about the whole weekend and what we really liked. The Eucharistic Adoration was by far the greatest part of the weekend for us. Followed by small group discussions which were made up of all age groups. It was amazing how each person faced different adversities in their lives. We talked about the younger adults that were present and the ones that helped out throughout the weekend either in welcoming us, providing music and song, or praying over us, and how strong their faith is. Truly we can see the fruits of Fr. Dennis and Adam's past work of laying the foundation for "Building up the Kingdom."

We have attended other seminars offered by our parish or neighboring parishes such as encounter series, men's retreat, speaker series, unbound, apologetics, but never a retreat where both of us could go and spend a weekend designed specifically for the attendees. We both have been taking baby steps over the last 5-7 years trying to develop a closer relationship with the Lord. This weekend allowed us to feel a very personal relationship with the Lord that we have been desiring for quite some time. Truly this weekend went beyond our expectations. If you want to grow closer to the Lord, don't let fear stop you. Take the time out of your busy schedule and sign up for the next upcoming retreat. We'll see you there.



The Holy Christmas Season

The Octave of Christmas

From the Latin word, Octava, comes the ancient practice of celebrating Easter and Christmas for eight wonderful days.

We would like to invite you to join our parish in allowing Christmas its proper observance by continuing the celebration for eight days. We are celebrating the Word made Flesh! Can we properly celebrate this unfathomable mystery in just one day?

The Octave begins with the Great Solemnity of the Birth of Our Savior, Jesus Christ on December 25th and lasts until the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God.

Some of the special Feasts and customs during the Christmas season are:

Feasts within the Octave of Christmas

Feast of the Holy Family

December 26/27th

Saturday, at 4:30 pm

Sunday at 8:30 and 10:30 am

Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God

Holy Day of Obligation

Thursday, December 31st 7:00 pm Vigil Mass

Friday, January 1st at 9:00 am

The Continuation of the Holy Season of Christmas

January 2/3rd

Solemnity of the Epiphany

Saturday Vigil 4:30 pm

Sunday 8:30 and 10:30 am

*Blessed chalks and prayers for the blessing of the home will be provided.

January 9/10th

Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

Saturday Vigil 4:30 pm

Sunday 8:30 and 10:30 am

*Blessed water will be provided for all the faithful to take home for devotional use.

