



Stronica Proboszcza



The Pastor's Page

September 29th, MMXIX

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Month of Our Lady of Sorrows

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!
Praised be Jesus Christ!

**Sunday, September 29th – Feast of the Archangels,
Michael, Gabriel & Raphael**

This great day is a triple celebration of the glory of God. The feast days of Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, who used to be remembered separately, have been combined into one joyful feast. It is called Michaelmas in some places. Although angels are mentioned in the Bible many times, only these three are specifically named. They are messengers of God, which is the meaning of the word "angel." St. Michael's role was to defend Christians from the powers of evil. This day, which comes as the nights grow longer and longer, is the church's fearless welcome to the dark and cold. Michael's name means, "Who is like God?" The 12th chapter of the Book of Revelation tells of Michael casting out of heaven those angels who presumed that they were like God. Michael is considered the special protector of Israel and also the protector of the church. The Book of Daniel tells us that Michael will lead the dead to God on the day of resurrection.

Gabriel was the archangel who brought the news that John the Baptist would be born to Zechariah and Elizabeth. It was Gabriel who appeared to Mary to ask her to become the mother of God. His name means "hero of God." The Book of Daniel says that Gabriel announced the end of the Jews' exile in Babylon. According to tradition, Gabriel will sound the trumpet to awaken the dead on the Day of Judgment.

Raphael's name means "God has healed." Raphael plays an important part in the Book of Tobit, where he guards a young man on a journey and restores sight to the man's elderly father. He describes himself as one of the seven angels who stand in the presence of God. In the Gospel of John, the healing pool where Jesus cured a paralyzed man was said to be a place where Raphael stirred the waters.

For centuries, this day has been an occasion for a holiday feast. Perhaps the cooler weather stirs the appetite. In many countries, goose is the traditional dish to serve, because geese are migrating at this time. In Germany roast pig is the fare of the day and in Scotland oatmeal cakes are served. St. Michael is the patron of policemen, bankers, grocers, and radiologists. St. Raphael is the patron of travelers, druggists, health inspectors and of happy meetings. St. Gabriel is the patron of postal workers, telephone and television workers, diplomats and messengers. His words of, "Hail Mary, full of grace," are the beginning of the prayer, Ave Maria.

Tuesday, October 1st – Feast of St. Therese of the Child Jesus ***“the Little Flower”***

Marie Françoise Martin grew up in Lisieux in France. Her parents were wealthy and religious. Marie was their youngest of five daughters, so she received a lot of attention from her parents, sisters and the family servants. All five girls became nuns!

Marie was raised by her sister Pauline after their mother died. When Marie was nine Pauline entered the Carmelite convent nearby. Marie began to long for the life of poverty and prayer at Pauline's convent. She obtained permission to join at the unusually early age of fifteen.

Marie was given the name Therese. Many English speaking people use the form Theresa. Those in charge of the young nuns were especially strict with her. They wanted to make sure she didn't receive special treatment. In addition to her housekeeping tasks, she cared for the convent chapel and later took on much of the work of guiding the young nuns who had come into the convent after her.

Therese's life centered around the gospels. She believed that any life could be a holy one. "To pick up a pin for love can convert a soul," she said. So she did her drab everyday chores with joy and love.

Therese's patience was put to its greatest test when she developed tuberculosis, a deadly and painful lung disease. Just before she died in 1897, at the age of 24, she made a startling statement "I promise to spend my heaven doing good on earth."

Therese wrote down her story because the leader of the convent had instructed her to do so. It wasn't intended for outside publication, only for the enjoyment of the sisters at other Carmelite convents. But they found it so helpful that they passed it on to their friends, and soon it was being read in many countries of the world. Therese's story gave its readers hope that they too, could become saints, even if their lives were not spectacular in any way.

Therese of Lisieux is not only a great saint of France where she lived her entire life but also popular as the patron saint of foreign missions. St. Therese has risen to the ranks of Doctor in the Church for her spiritual approach to life in which everything one does and experiences, no matter how small, is offered to God. She also once remarked that from heaven she would let a shower of roses fall upon the earth and so she is lovingly called the "*Little Flower*."

The statue of St. Therese in our church currently stands in the south east front corner of the transept. It was a gift to the parish in 1930 from Mr. & Mrs. J. F. Doliasz, just five years after her canonization by Pope Pius XI in 1925.

Wednesday, October 2nd – Feast of the Guardian Angels

I do hope you believe in angels! The bible makes it very clear that they do exist. It is also a teaching of our faith. We just don't have liturgical celebrations in honor of beings that are cute but don't really exist! By the way, no one has any idea of what an angel might look like so the wings, halos and harps are not for sure! Angels are spiritual living creations of God Almighty. The belief that they are charged with guarding us, is taken from scripture. The book of Exodus says: *See, I am sending an angel before you, to guard you on the way*, **Ex. 23:20-23**. Jesus said: *I assure you, their angels in heaven constantly behold my heavenly Father's face*, **Mt. 18:5**. "Angel" means messenger in Greek. They are mentioned often in scripture as not only messengers but also defenders, companions, guides and guardians. Guardian angels have a special task – to assist human beings in their journey to God. Devotion to the Holy Guardian Angels is a fine way to honor God's enduring love and providential care extended to each person day-in and day-out until life's end.

Friday, October 4th – Feast of St. Francis of Assisi

This great saint of the 12th century was born rich into the Benardone family, the son of a wealthy cloth merchant in Italy, and died poor in the eyes of this world. When he was baptized in 1181 he was given the name John. Because his mother was French, he was given the then rare nickname of Francesco, which means “the little Frenchman.” As a teenager, Francis sold cloth in his father’s shop. He was very good at charming the customers. At night he went to parties with the young nobles of the town of Assisi. He loved fine clothes and everything else that went with being rich. He wasn’t much of a student, but he loved the tales of King Arthur and his knights in armor.

Francis wanted to be a knight himself. When the town of Assisi went to war with Perugia, a neighboring town, Francis joined the campaign. A year as a prisoner of war changed his outlook. When he came home he was ill for months. He was confused because everything that had given him joy now seemed empty. Francis spent hours praying for guidance in San Damiano, an old run down chapel on the outskirts of town. One day in 1206 guidance was provided. “Repair my house,” said the voice of Christ from the cross of the abandoned church, “which, as you see, is falling into ruin.” He carried bricks on his back to the chapel and began to repair its stonework. Only much later did Francis realize that the house that God was talking about was not the small chapel but the entire Church. His family thought him to have gone insane and his father disinherited him. Francis renounced all his possessions including the very clothes on his back. He was 25 years of age.

The Church of Francis’s day was wealthy and powerful, and most people did not have the courage to take the words of the gospels literally. But Francis followed Christ’s example. He became the “Poverello” – the “little poor one.” He owned only one tunic, a plain brown robe with a rope for a belt, which was the garment worn by peasants when they labored in the fields. This would become the well known Franciscan habit. He worked with lepers, the most despised people of society. He acted as a peacemaker between warring towns.

Soon others began to join Francis, earning their bread by working in the fields or by doing odd jobs. They preached not just to the rich but to the poor as well. In 1212 Francis helped his friend St. Clare begin an order of religious women. They were cloistered sisters in Assisi. And Francis invented something called the Third Order, a way for people to live the religious life while continuing their ordinary work.

Francis had an understanding of the unity of all creation that was way ahead of its time. He addressed every created thing as Brother or Sister and treated everything with reverence. He allowed the beauty of creation to fill him with joy. He found the meaning of life in the total imitation of Christ. His faithfulness in his attempt to imitate the Lord was rewarded by God in 1224 with the gift of the *stigmata* or wounds of Christ, which miraculously appeared on his body.

The idea for the nativity scenes we enjoy at Christmas was his. As a deacon he organized the first living nativity in 1223. The order of religious he founded was also responsible for the creation of the Stations of the Cross devotion we practice during Lent. Francis became ill and died on October 3rd, 1226, when he was only about 45 years old. On his deathbed he composed the Cantic of the Sun, a hymn of praise still sung to this day. Then he asked to be laid on Brother Earth naked so that he could welcome Sister Death as simply as possible. The pope who canonized him just two years later described him as “the most perfect image of Christ.” His body rests in the basilica that was built at Assisi after his death. St. Francis of Assisi is a patron saint of Italy.

Hopefully you have noticed that our statue of St. Francis has recently been moved to the back wall of the church. He is portrayed gazing upon the cross. The skull at his feet represents “Sister Death” that he spoke about at the end of his life. Skulls in church art also represent the idea that when one becomes a religious one dies to his or her old self and becomes a new person. The St. Rosalia statue in the front of the church has the same skull. St. Francis is also seen on the mural in the sanctuary next to the Sacred Heart altar. A skull is also seen at his feet there.

First Friday of the Month of October!

So quickly another month has passed and we come to the First Friday of the month of the Holy Rosary – October. Please keep in mind that in the Catholic tradition every Friday of every week is a day of remembrance of the death of Our Lord on the cross. We are expected to remember this saving action of Christ by doing some kind of penance every Friday of our life. In days gone by the expected penance of all Catholics was to not eat meat on Friday. Times changed as did people's life styles and eating habits, and it was possible to observe the letter of this law while ignoring the spirit of it as lobster, crab legs, shrimp and scallops became very much available to the casual diner – not very penitential, do you think? Now the Church expects every good Catholic to tailor the penance to their personal lifestyle.

Penitential actions are quite different from person to person. A mature Catholic prayerfully decides how he or she will commemorate the Lord's death in their life. Going to Mass on Friday is a wonderful way to do this! I hope you don't find attending Mass to be penitential in a sense that it is a painful experience. Still every Mass we attend is a spiritual way of being present with our Lord and our Lady on Calvary. The First Friday of the month is even more special. On this day in addition to the passion and death of our Lord, we call to mind His Sacred Heart. This heart that was pierced on Calvary is a heart full of love and mercy for us. We receive that mercy and love in Holy Communion and so Catholics are strongly encouraged to go to Mass on First Friday and receive communion. In our parish Mass is offered every First Friday at 6:30 AM, 8:00 AM and at 7:00 PM. The Most Blessed Sacrament is exposed on the Altar after the 8:00 AM Mass until 10:00 AM and again from 5:00 PM until 6:30 when the Litany to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is prayed and Benediction takes place. Please consider integrating these important spiritual "exercises" in your busy life. Jesus promises you will benefit greatly from it!

Festival results

Many people have been wondering how well this year's Polish Festival in August did. Over a month has now passed and it safe to say that all the outstanding bills associated with the festival have now been paid. If you attended last Sunday's Festival Workers Appreciation Party you have already seen this year's figures. The report looks like this: total sales on the grounds of the festival - \$227,056.47, which is an increase from last year by \$31,692.24, main raffle ticket sales - \$51,317.00, which is an increase by \$3461.00.00, donations received - \$22,100.12, which is an increase by \$9221.62, gross total - \$300,473.59, an increase by \$40,680.86, total expenses - \$170,459.54, an increase by \$27,716.62 and finally the net profit - \$130,014.05 an increase by \$16,658.24.

The increased profit of this year's festival is the result of noticeably greater attendance on Friday, and Saturday and is in spite of increased expenses! We can all take pride in this extremely respectable amount of money earned as it is a testimony to the hard work and devotion of the parishioners of our church. It is also a reminder of the divine providence and goodness of God who rewards those who willingly work together for such a noble cause, even when times are challenging. May God repay each one who donated to the parish festival in any way and may Our Blessed Lady of the Scapular who revealed herself as a loving mother long ago on Mount Carmel always watch over each one of you!

"Remember that nothing important ever happens until someone takes a chance."