

# The Weave

July 2018

Volume 22 Issue 3

A Newsletter of St. Mary Parish Family, Franklin MA

## St. Rocco Festival Food Finale

by Fr. Brian Manning

Times change and traditions evolve. This year's annual Feast of St. Rocco, on August 9-12 will mark the 40<sup>th</sup> and final food festival in Franklin.

Driven by the energy and passion of long-time committee members, and executed with the strength of 300 volunteers, this festival finale will be one to remember! This year's celebration will feature more than a dozen food booths offering everything from fried clams, calzones and sausages to authentic Italian pastries and fried dough. Entertainment throughout the weekend will include live bands, DJs, raffles, and amusement rides. Commemorative T-shirts and aprons will be on sale. Raffles for cash prizes and homemade items will be available all weekend.

Throughout the years, the festi-

val has adapted to the changing lifestyle of the community. In the early days all food was donated and prepared in the kitchens of the parish faithful. For a time, food was



prepared in the kitchen of what was then the St. Mary's School. Today, the food is prepared under the tents where it is served, under strict health guide-

lines. The one constant for 40 years has been the enthusiastic volunteers who prepare and serve the food throughout the weekend.

Entertainment has changed over the years as well. Music has always been part of the celebration and the early days featured several stages with multiple bands and dancing. A

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## Enkindle Our Hearts

by Joan McGuire

Since my first visit to the Holy Land Elijah the prophet has always been my model in listening to God. The morning we were traveling to Mount Horeb, Father Steven Doyle, our Franciscan guide read us the scripture about the prophet Elijah. As with most of the prophets he had to tell both people and kings some hard things. They were frequently endangered for preaching these admonitions from God, especially when they came true. At these times they turned to God for consolation.

(1Kings 19 : 11-ff) As Elijah was fleeing from the death of Queen Jezebel, Elijah heard God tell him to go to stand on Mt. Horeb and He would come to him. As he stood waiting, first a violent wind blasted his way past him, but the Lord wasn't in the wind. Next an earthquake shook the mountain, but the Lord wasn't in the earthquake. Finally a fire swept by, but the Lord was not in the fire. Then there was a great silence. He felt a small breath. It was in the midst of this silence that Elijah discerned the presence of God in the gentle whisper of the Spirit.

Because Elijah was attentive and

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## *It's the People I Will Remember!*

by John M. Ristaino

So, in a few weeks the St. Mary Parish Community will celebrate the fortieth and final St. Rocco Festival. This brings with it a wave of emotions for all of us. Some are sad to see it end. Others are relieved to know that they can enjoy an additional summer weekend because they no longer will be volunteering at the Feast. While still others are happy that for forty years St. Mary Parish and the Greater Franklin Community have enjoyed a summer festival which brought people together to celebrate and to have fun!

When I reflect back on the past forty years it's the people I remember most frequently and most fondly. The St. Rocco Festival has been a great melting pot for our Parish and town. It never mattered what ethnic heritage people possessed. On the week of St. Rocco, everyone came together to pray, to eat, to visit, to catch up, to laugh and to enjoy each other. When at the festival it never mattered how much money you made, what you did for work, what faith community you belonged to, or how old you were. What mattered most was people coming together in the spirit of community.

The smiles I have seen at the St. Rocco Festival are too many to count. They are like the stars in the night sky always shining down. There have been countless hugs as

well. The St. Rocco Festival has been an annual reunion of people tied together by St. Mary Parish, the Town of Franklin or the love of Italian food and good music!

I will remember the people at the Celebrations of the St. Rocco Masses each year. The pride which the Arcaro and Carlucci families have taken in preparing the bread for the Opening Mass every year will always be with me. The hope-filled faces of the devout participants at the annual Healing Mass and the tired but jubilant faces of the people supporting and celebrating the Closing Mass are images which I will carry with me as we transition from this wonderful celebration.

Children have always been a huge part of the St. Rocco Festival. In the early years amusement parks and carnivals were not as easily accessed by families as they are today. The St. Rocco Festival provided an opportunity for children of all ages to enjoy such outlets right here in Franklin. The excitement on the faces of young people as they hit the midway was palpable.

Young people have also played a pivotal role in setting up, supporting and cleaning up the Festival. It has been amazing to watch and reflect back on today's young adults who have been of service to the Festival over the years. They have grown with the Feast and many of them, though grown and moved away, still come "home" to visit and to assist. Volunteers from all walks of life have given of themselves in countless ways these past forty years. The number of man hours contributed by volunteers is far too high to count. What is amazing is that the folks who have volunteered have done so with love. They are always smiling (even when the crowds swell) and they always look as though they are enjoying a great time.

The Franklin Community has been strengthened by the annual Feast of St. Rocco. High school friends and neighbors have warmly greeted each other. The Feast has provided an annual weekend for getting to know new residents as well as to catch up with long term friends and acquaintances.

The St. Rocco Festival has been a time to come together as one, as God's family. In this coming together in this way at the Feast we have all grown closer to God by loving each other. The temperatures have often been scorching hot and sometimes very wet as well. However, through it all we gathered together as one.

When I began to think about writing this article, I had hoped to mention those people I remember most fondly. Then, when the writing began, I realized that there are way too many people that I remember and always will. The people of the St. Rocco Festival are truly the pillars which have held this mighty tradition in place for forty years. The planners, the volunteers, the donors, the patrons, the prayers, the priests, the parishioners and the participants have all played incredibly vital roles in making the St. Rocco Festival what it has been.

The memories of them will long be remembered and treasured, long after the last note is played, the final amusement ride ends, the concluding Blessings have been proclaimed, the last of the food has been served and the clean-up has been completed.

There is a saying that "love lives on forever in our hearts as memories." Thanks to the people of the St. Rocco Festival I have a treasure chest of memories because of the love they gave to St. Mary Parish and our annual Feast of St. Rocco. THANK YOU to everyone who has contributed in any way these past forty years. May God Bless you through the intercession of St. Rocco now and always.

### The Weave

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## ...St Rocco Festival Food Finale

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pie eating competition and chocolate chip cookie contest are some of the past events. And the young and young-at-heart have enjoyed old-fashioned midway games, carnival rides, cotton candy and laughter galore throughout the years!

Weather has been noteworthy over time. The festival has been held in scorching heat and throughout thunderstorm-ridden weekends, but the spirit of the festival has always endured.

The Feast of St. Rocco Festival began in 1978 as the brainchild of Father Michael Guarino. He sought to create a religious, social and cultural event in Franklin that followed the format of traditional Italian festivals. On a visit to what were once the grounds of the St. Mary School convent, Fr. Guarino found a statue of St. Rocco and his idea found a saint to celebrate in such a festival. St Rocco, the patron saint of healing, was born in the 13<sup>th</sup> century to a wealthy family in France, but gave away his inheritance and set out as a pilgrim who ministered to the sick, especially those suffering from plague. Having healed many people through intercessory prayer without contracting the disease itself, he finally succumbed to illness and in his great suffering, went away to a small hut in the woods, so as not to be a burden on others. He was ministered to by a dog who brought him bread daily, and a spring miraculously appeared near the hut providing him with water.

Ironically, with the feast focused on healing, accessibility is a ma-

jour challenge for many parishioners. Change is taking place not only with the evolution of the festival, but also within the physical building of our church itself. During the Festival Finale, construction will be in full swing for an addition to the church that will include an accessible entrance, indoor elevator, restrooms on both levels and a food service area. This addition to the church will also feature a permanent location for the statue of St. Rocco to reside, where people can visit with the saint and pray year-round in

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## St. Vincent de Paul Backpack Drive

The St. Mary's Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is excited to announce its 24th annual collection of back-to-school supplies to help children prepare for a wonderful school year. If you would like to participate, please buy a school backpack, and fill it with back to school supplies. Please label the backpack either **Grades K-3, Grades 4-5, Grades 6-8, or Grades 9-12**. The backpacks should not be specific for either a boy or a girl. The backpacks may be dropped by the food boxes near the prayer wall on the weekend of **August 18/19** and on **Monday, (August 20<sup>th</sup>)** until noon. Members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society will distribute backpacks to families in town with school-aged children. We are also hoping to have enough backpacks to offer them to families living in area shelters. Last year, 140 children and teens benefited from your generosity. It is so important for children and youth to see the goodness in the world. Suggestions for supplies may be found on our website. Lists are also available at the front doors of the church.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this year's drive!

## View From the Pew

by Joan McGuire

### Till We Have Faces

At the St Rocco Festival, I enjoy watching the children getting their faces painted. They are so involved in the process and intently watch the face painter. It always reminds me of the title of a C.S. Lewis book "Till We Have Faces." I have never read the book but the title opens my mind to many aspects of my relationship with God.

God is the Divine Face Painter, and the many colored paint brushes are the people and the events - joyful, painful and monotonous that we encounter in our daily lives. Like the children sitting before the face painter, we must lift our face and look intently into the face of God as he gently applies the brush strokes to create our persona. In order to be changed we need to imitate Christ in his ultimate vulnerability to people and situations. One only has to read his encounters with the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:24-30), the woman with the hemorrhage (Mark 5:25-34) and the Roman Centurion (Luke 7:6-10), to mention only a few, in order to see how he allows his humanity to be affected by the people with whom He comes in contact. After His Resurrection, He not only came to the sorrowing people in the Garden of Entombment but also to the discouraged and disheartened on the dusty road to Emmaus and to the guilty and confused on the sandy seashores of Galilee.

Our faces are complete when we have empathy with the plight of everyone we meet - without judgment. After all, God only judges us after we have completed our lives and have been transformed by our mistakes - even more than by our successes. It is only then that we see that He has created on us "the mirror of His Face."

As happens with so many things that we cherish, this will be the end of our yearly Festival of St. Rocco, but the things that I have learned over the years as I served at the Anointing Mass and worked the booth will continue to shape my life. Greeting strangers I served in the booth with a smile, an introduction and a few kind words, becoming friends and getting to know more personally my coworkers and meeting parishioners whom I would not ordinarily meet because they are homebound. The realization of belonging to this immense family of the children of God is awe inspiring.



**Mark Your Parish  
Calendar**

- July 22 Baptisms, 1:30
- July 24 Mass at nursing home, 2pm
- July 29 Baptisms
- Aug. 1 Mass at Atria, 2pm
- Aug. 5 **St. Rocco Opening Mass**  
10:30
- Aug. 5 Baptisms
- Aug. 6 Baptism Class, 1:30pm
- Aug. 8 Mass at Forge Hill, 2pm
- Aug. 9-12 **Feast of St. Rocco**
- Aug. 9 **Rides and midway open**  
5-10pm
- Aug. 10 **Rides and Food booths open**  
5-10pm
- Aug. 11 **Anointing Mass, 10am**
- Aug. 11 **Rides, Food booths,**  
**entertainment, 11am-10pm**
- Aug. 12 **Closing Mass and Procession**  
**of the Statue, 10:30am**
- Aug. 12 **No Noon Mass**
- Aug. 12 **Rides, Food booth,**  
**Entertainment, open 12-8pm**
- Aug. 14 **Vigil Mass, 4pm**
- Aug. 15 **Feast of the Assumption**  
**Masses at 7am & 7:30pm**
- Aug. 18 SVdP Backpack Collection
- Aug. 19 SVdP Backpack Collection
- Aug. 19 Baptisms
- Aug. 21 Mass at Franklin nursing home
- Aug. 26 Baptisms
- Sept. 5 Mass at Atria
- Sept. 8 Men's Faith Formation, 8:45am
- Sept. 9 Baptism Class, 1:30pm
- Sept. 9 Baptisms
- Sept. 12 Mass at Forge Hill
- Sept. 16 Baptisms
- Sept. 23 Baptisms
- Sept. 29 SVdP Walk for the Poor
- Sept. 30 Baptisms
- Oct. 3 Mass at Atria
- Oct. 6 St. Rocco Mass, 4pm
- Oct. 7 Baptisms
- Oct. 10 Mass at Forge Hill
- Oct. 13 Men's Faith Formation, 8:45am
- Oct. 14 Baptisms
- Oct. 14 Baptism Class, 1:30
- Oct. 17 Bereavement Support Group  
begins, pre-registration required
- Oct. 21 Baptisms
- Oct. 23 Mass at Franklin nursing home
- Oct. 28 Baptisms
- Oct. 31 **Vigil Mass, 4pm**
- Nov. 1 **All Saints Day**  
**Masses at 7am & 7:30pm**
- Nov. 3 Mass of Remembrance, 11am
- Nov. 4 Baptisms
- Nov. 4 Baptism Class, 1:30
- Nov. 10 **Confirmation, 10am & 1pm**
- Nov. 10 Men's Faith Formation, 8:45
- Nov. 11 Baptisms
- Nov. 14 Mass at Forge Hill
- Nov. 18 **Baptisms**
- Nov. 22 **Thanksgiving**
- Nov. 25 Baptisms
- Nov. 27 Mass at Franklin nursing home

**At Our Construction Site**

*by Father Jack Sullivan*

At the completion of our construction project, our church building will have acquired two additional exit/entry-ways. Gerald Kicanas, the retired bishop of Tucson, admitted that a Confirmation candidate once puzzled him by his unique reply to the bishop's usual open-ended question: What was your most powerful and influential learning during your preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation? "My top learning? I'd say it was learning the location of the exits of this church building." The bishop was momentarily out-of-words at this reply. The bishop found his escape by agreeing with the young adult. Yes, we come to Mass here precisely

so that we might be sent away to bring the good news of the gospel out there. Friends, it is no surprise that our concluding Dismissal Rite at Mass endorses this perspective. "Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life" or "Go and announce the gospel of the Lord."

Experts in product-promotion rely upon consumers to talk-up and to create a buzz about this restaurant or food item. On social media people report their choice of restaurants. Friends, after we have exited the church building, we also have the opportunity to share what we have gained from our experience at Mass. Did you experience comfort and consolation from something that was said or sung?

One verse from the Psalms always has the power to soothe and comfort me. "Day after day, may the Lord be blest. He bears our burdens; God is our savior. This God of ours is a God who saves. The Lord our Lord provides an escape from death" ( Psalm 68:20-21, Revised Grail Psalms translation). Experts point out that the English word "escape" is a translation of the Hebrew *tosa'ot* which closely relates to the Modern Hebrew word for "exit."

One perceptive toddler has recently identified Saint Mary's Church as the place where "they talk about death." Yes, we admit that we talk about death. However, we always keep together, as if they were dance partners, talk about death and the gospel good news that Jesus Christ promises us and all his siblings an escape from everlasting death, an exit-way through death into the joys of heavenly life in the great company of the friends and followers of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ.

**St. Rocco Entertainment  
Schedule**

**Friday, August 10**

6-8pm on the field  
Andi the Clown

6-10pm on the bandstand  
The Reminisants

**Saturday, August 11**

1:00 Paws, The PawSox Mascot  
1:30-4:30pm on the bandstand  
Bob Costello DJ

3-5pm on the field  
Andi the Clown

6-10pm on the bandstand  
Sea Breeze

**Sunday, August 12**

12-4pm on the bandstand  
Bob Costello DJ

3-5pm on the field  
Andi the Clown

4-7pm on the bandstand  
Jerry Seeco Band

7-9pm on the bandstand  
Bob Costello DJ



## Big, Big, Big, Big Shoes

by Stephen May

Nan Rafter inspires us all. She certainly inspired me during my first week in my role as her replacement as Pastoral Associate here at St. Mary's. Nan patiently took the time to share with me her vision of parish outreach and to introduce me to as many people as possible. I am very grateful for the wisdom and advice she graciously imparted to me. I am also grateful to Nan for being extremely well organized. It has made my start so much easier. Yes, they are big shoes to fill, but thanks to Nan I feel very well prepared to do so.

My background is a little different than Nan's. I spent nearly 30 years in corporate America before feeling called to follow a different path. I started my faith-based career by teaching in a Catholic high school and later became a hospice chaplain. I then took on youth ministry for a couple years before embracing a full-time management role for three parishes in Hyde Park. I am now thrilled to be a part of such a vibrant, faith-

filled community as there is here at St. Mary's.

I have a passion for learning and have degrees in Engineering Physics, an MBA, and an MA in Catholic Theology. I am also in formation to become a deacon (God willing), with two years left before ordination. I look forward to sharing my love of learning with many adults in our parish during the years to come.

There is so much to do here at St. Mary's, but so far my emphasis has been on outreach and bringing St. Mary's out into the community. We have many, many parishioners who love St. Mary's and the Eucharist but cannot get to the church. It is a privilege to lead a team of committed volunteers who provide pastoral visits and the Blessed Sacrament. In addition to visiting people in their homes, we also visit all of the nursing homes and assisted-living facilities in and around Franklin. To me, being part of a parish community is critical for living out the faith-life that Christ calls each of us to live.

What a blessing it is for the parishioners of St. Mary's to have their parish prioritize this ministry!

If there are any parishioners, or families with homebound or members living in facilities, who can't make it to the parish (either temporarily or long term) and feel that their spiritual lives could be enhanced by a visit from a pastoral visitor, please do not hesitate to contact us. It will be an honor to meet you and pray with you and arrange for your pastoral care with either myself or one of our other very compassionate pastoral ministers. And if you feel called to become part of our team of pastoral visitors, please call the rectory or email me at [smay@stmarysfranklin.org](mailto:smay@stmarysfranklin.org).

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### PARISH COMMUNICATION

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This parish is very large and active. It is important for us to be able to give you accurate information and for you to be able to contact us as needed. If you wish to contact anyone at the rectory we can be reached by phone, 508-528-0020; Fax, 508-528-1641; or email. Here are email addresses for the clergy, Religious Education and rectory staff:

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Terry Kerr, Music Director: [terry.kerr@att.net](mailto:terry.kerr@att.net) 508-541-3286

If your parish group or organization would like to place a notice in the bulletin, we must receive it **in writing (email is preferred)** by 5pm Sunday afternoon for the following weekend. Information can also be submitted for inclusion on the parish website at any time. Bulletin or website information can be emailed to [parishpublishing@stmarysfranklin.org](mailto:parishpublishing@stmarysfranklin.org)

**If your organization is planning to use any parish facilities**, such as the church, church hall, lower church meeting rooms or the school, for your meetings, events, etc. it is **necessary** that you call and reserve the time and place that you want. This is the **only** way that you can be assured of having your activity at the desired location.

**CHECK OUT OUR PARISH WEBSITE:** [www.stmarysfranklin.org](http://www.stmarysfranklin.org). There is a wealth of information available there.

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### The Foods of St. Rocco

#### Manicotti

Chicken or Eggplant Parmesan

Eggplant or Chicken Parm Subs

Meatball or Sausage Subs

Manicotti or Eggplant w/sausage

Pasta w/meatballs or sausage

#### Antipasto

Italian Tomato Salad

Cold Cut or Prosciutto Subs

#### Calzones

#### Pizza

Stuffed Quohogs

Clam Cakes

Fried Clams

Fried Scallops

Clam Chowder

Chicken Fingers

Mozzarella Sticks

Toasted Ravioli

Mac and Cheese Bites

Steak and Cheese Eggroll

Corn on the Cob

Hamburgers & Hot Dogs

French Fries

Onion Rings

Fresh Squeezed Lemonade

Italian Pastries

Cannoli

Belgian Waffles

Fried Dough



**St. Mary's  
Music Notes!!**

by Terry Kerr

The St. Mary Adult Choir will begin their Choral Season for 2018 - 2019 very soon! The Adult Choir rehearses Thursday Evenings and sings weekly at the Sunday, 10:30 a.m. Mass from October - June.

The First Rehearsal for the season is more of a social event than a rehearsal. The first rehearsal of the Season is a social gathering, a Wine and Cheese Party. The social setting is more relaxed and gives us the opportunity to welcome back returning choir members, from a well-deserved summer rest, and to welcome new members to the group.

Mark your calendars:

**First Choir Rehearsal**  
Thurs., Sept. 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.  
Upper Church Choir Loft!

**Mass of Thanksgiving  
for St. Rocco Volunteers**

The Adult Choir will be singing at the Mass of Thanksgiving on Sat., October 6, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. to honor all those who have generously volunteered their time for the St. Rocco Festival!

**Feast of St. Rocco August 5-12**

**Thursday, August 9**  
5pm-10pm All rides open  
Hot dogs, burgers, pizza available  
\*\*\*\*\*

**All rides and food booths open**

**Friday, August 10** 5pm-10pm  
**Saturday, August 11** 11am-10pm  
**Sunday, August 12** 12noon-8pm  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Bracelet Days**  
Ride all rides for one price  
**Thursday - 5-10pm**  
**Saturday 11am - 3pm**  
**Sunday 12noon - 4pm**

**Back to School**

by Karen Ackles

Soon the summer will be over and the children will be back to school and starting their Religious Education classes. Our students (Grades 3-8) study from a series called We Believe With Project Disciple by William H. Sadlier, Inc. This program is "rooted in Scripture and faithful to the tradition of the Catholic Church" (Sadlier, T10). All lessons in this series are in conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Every lesson gives teachers the exact correlation of the material being covered with the Catechism and is then incorporated into their lesson plan.

To us, one of the most important parts of the program is the Project Disciple piece, teaching the children to live out their Catholic faith every day of their lives. This is done "by giving witness to the life and teach-

ings of Jesus Christ through their words and deeds" (Sadlier, T10). Every fall when classes start we have the students involved in a Corporal Work of Mercy project. This year we will be supporting the Judge Ireland Children's Fund. We like to think of this as children helping children. The mission of the Judge Ireland Children's Fund, Inc. ([www.judgeirelandchildrensfund.com](http://www.judgeirelandchildrensfund.com)) is to assist families and children who have experienced severe hardship. This is often as a result of neglect, abuse, domestic violence or mental illness.

Honorable Justice Roderick L. Ireland spent 13 years as a Judge in the Suffolk County Juvenile Court. In 1990, when his career was over, he asked his staff of attorneys to "just take care of the kids." The Judge Ireland Children's Fund was started to provide clothing and food to those in need. One hundred percent of all donations go to the children.

The easiest way for us to help out is to hold a Gift Card Drive. We will be launching this at the beginning of our Religious Education School year. It is our hope that all families in our program can donate a gift card to one of the following stores - Walmart, Target, Market Basket, Shaws, or Stop and Shop. Any denomination is helpful!! We ask that you indicate on the gift card or the card attached to it, how much the gift card is worth. More information will be sent out to all of our families in the fall.

If anyone who does not have children attending Religious Education would like to donate to this worthy cause, you may place a gift card (in an envelope marked "Judge Ireland Children's Fund") in the collection basket at Mass. If you would prefer, you can send it to St. Mary's Religious Education Office, 201 Main Street, Franklin, MA 02038.



**Feast of Saint Rocco  
Liturgical Services**

**Sunday, August 5  
Opening Mass 10:30am**

**Saturday, August 11  
Mass and Sacrament of  
Anointing of the Sick  
10:00am on the festival grounds**

**Sunday, August 12  
Closing Mass 10:30am  
followed by the Procession of the  
St. Rocco statue  
to the festival grounds**

## ...St. Rocco Festival Food Finale

(Continued from page 3)

good weather and bad.

Since its inception, the festival has always included three separate Masses. Kicking off the week of the feast is the Opening Mass at 10:30 on Sunday, August 5 at the church. This Mass is celebrated for the deceased friends and family listed in the St. Rocco program book. At this Mass, rolls that have been blessed are given out to all who attend, just as St. Rocco's faithful dog brought him bread when he was sick, that helped him survive.

The following week on Saturday, August 11, an Anointing Mass will be held at 10:00 under the tent on the Festival Grounds behind the school across from the church. According to Paula Coughlin, long-time volunteer and Parish Administrative Assistant, "This always attracts a large, reverent crowd. There is something moving about

seeing all these people attend Mass and receive an anointing for healing, even as the booth volunteers are readying their booths to serve the people coming for lunch."

This year, the 40<sup>th</sup> and final Closing Mass for the Feast of St Rocco will be held on Sunday, August 12 at 10:30 at the church. Following Mass, a procession will carry the statue of St. Rocco from the church to the field.

As the food and festival portion of this feast comes to an end, we can look forward to new traditions and ways to celebrate our faith, family and friends. As we conclude the Festival of Food portion of the Feast of Saint Rocco this year, we will continue to honor in new ways the vision of faith that Fr. Michael and his many lay volunteers shared with all of us then and through all the years. With changes to the church, the statue of St.

Rocco will be permanently housed in the addition where people can pray at any time. And while our faith and town community may not see the food booths and rides on the fairgrounds next year, new traditions will bloom that are compatible with today's lifestyle and culture. We will also gather in October at Mass to thank God for the gifts he has given us through the intercession of Saint Rocco and then have a wonderful social afterwards for all the Rocco volunteers throughout the years. Fr. Michael Guarino will be the celebrant and special guest at this Mass and Reception.

Don't miss this historic event. Come for the rides, Come for the people. Come for the healing. Just come... be a part of the St. Rocco Festival Food Finale!

## ...Enkindle Our Hearts

(Continued from page 1)

silent, he could discern between the chaotic activity around him and the gentle Spirit. Being docile to the Spirit means quieting our minds long enough to hear the Spirit speaking to us. It means closing our eyes, slowing down our breathing, giving up our verbal prayer agenda and listening. In every conversation there must be time for each person to listen as well as to speak. We must truly believe that God wants to speak to us. He wants us to be confident that we too can learn to sense the Spirit's presence and hear the voice of God. But God is always the gentleman. If we speak constantly He will not interrupt us.

At Mass he speaks frequently during the words of the Mass. The Homily and, in a most personal way, in the incredible moment after receiving His body and blood, as we sit with Him quietly in the pew He draws us into His presence as a loving parent embraces a beloved child. At that moment only our relationship matters.



## St. Rocco Anointing Mass

Our annual Mass with the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will take place Saturday, **August 11<sup>th</sup>** at 10:00am under the tent on the St. Rocco Festival Grounds.

This Mass is an opportunity for people of all ages who have a need for a physical, emotional, or spiritual healing to receive this sacrament. It is no longer reserved just for those who are approaching the end of life. With this in mind, please join us to pray for the improved health of our parishioners. Light refreshments will be served.

For more information, contact Stephen May, Pastoral Associate.

## My Children Do Not All Attend Mass.....?

by Deacon Guy St. Sauveur

I have 4 children. All grown adults. I am very proud of each of them. They were all active in the church community as young people. My wife and I did our best to raise them to be honest, sincere, polite, have faith, care for neighbors, etc. Most of these are probably the same things you did. So how come some of these now adult children of mine do not go to church?

Many books and studies have taken place to not only try to capture the WHY they no longer attend but also the WHAT to do about it.

A few years back the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life did a survey of the most common reasons people gave for leaving the church. Are you ready??

- Just gradually drifted away from the religion (71%)
- Stopped believing in the religion's teaching (65%)
- Spiritual needs not being met (43%)
- Unhappy with teachings about the Bible (29%)
- Dissatisfaction with atmosphere at worship services (26%)
- Dissatisfied with clergy at congregation (18%)
- Found a religion they liked more (10%)

So if they don't get your attention here's more – in 2014 the Diocese of Springfield IL teamed with Benedictine University to do a survey based on the response to “why did you leave?” Responses –

- Spiritual needs not meet (68%)
- Lost interest (67%)
- Too many money requests (56%)
- No longer believe (48%)
- Dissatisfaction with atmosphere (47%)
- Too ritualistic (38%)
- Too formal (38%)
- Music not enjoyable (36%)

Honestly, there were times in my life when I did fit into one or more of those reasons. I think we all have those times in our lives. It's called growing up. It also includes event, activities, and thought processes that put us in positions to make decisions. As parents we hope and help our child to make the best decisions. As a person, there are times we do not choose wisely. Our faith is also part of that.

Recently we hear a lot about this thing called “evangelization.” Technically it means to announce the Good News of Jesus who rose from the dead and to help others to personally encounter Him. I never heard any of that in my Religious Education class with Sister

Mary Margaret. What I did get is that we get Baptized and we get Catechized. It all seems confusing. So do I as a person just give up, sit at Mass, go home for lunch and continue my regularly scheduled activities? What if I am a parent? Should I assume my children (no matter how old) are encountering the same issues? Should I just assume I have failed as a parent?

These are lots of concerns and issues to address both as an individual and a parent. This is a not just about married folk either. It affects all of us. It requires some serious thinking, reflecting and maybe even praying. The point is when it comes to your faith; working on it versus ignoring it is the best path to take.

The one guarantee we have in the challenging issue is that God is patient and kind and waits for us. He never leaves us. When we feel away from God, it's not because God has moved but we have. He always loves us. We need to be open and willing to address the issues we have when it comes to our faith, to ourselves and to a heavenly Father who loves us.

Peace be with you always and may our Blessed Mother guide your footsteps.

*For more information on this subject I would suggest checking out: “Return: How to draw your child back to the church” by Brandon Vogt. Foreword by Bishop Robert Barron.*

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