

A NOTE FROM FATHER EICKHOFF

Later this month on Wednesday, July 26 our parish will celebrate the feast day of our patron saint. I hope that you will be able to join us here at church for a celebratory Mass in honor of St. Anne, the mother of Mary, at 7pm. The Mass will be followed by an outdoor reception in the back parking lot and grassy areas along Lombardy Street. The parish will provide the snacks and refreshments and the parishioners will provide the lawn chairs. If you are wondering why we are holding an outdoor reception, it is because the parish hall will be set up that week for Vacation Bible School.

You might be wondering about all the attention that the Catholic Church pays to the saints of God. You might even call such attention a "cult." Don't worry I won't be offended if you are thinking that for the Church refers to the attention paid to the saints as the "cult of the saints." Simply put, it is a part of our Christian faith that all of the baptized share a common bond through Jesus Christ. This bond brought about in the Sacrament of Baptism makes us a single, united people no matter where we are in the world; or whether we are living or deceased. This second part might confuse some people, but to the Christian why should it matter if a fellow Christian is living or dead. After all, Jesus Christ is the victor over the power of death. No one who has died in the grace of Jesus Christ is truly dead for they are actually alive in God. Death cannot break the bond of Baptism for death has no power over Jesus Christ.

If in life we often ask our fellow Christians to pray for us or for others, then why should we not ask our fellow Christians, who though dead in the eyes of the world are actually alive in God, to pray for us? In particular, we seek out those holy men and women who have lived lives of outstanding Christian virtue (we call them saints for short) to intercede for us before Almighty God. Sometimes we might foster a singular devotion towards a particular saint: perhaps a saint who had experienced similar trials to ourselves, or perhaps a saint who worked in a similar profession, or perhaps a saint we simply admire for their faithfulness to Jesus Christ. In such cases we focus our prayers towards that particular saint asking him or her – whom we know stands always before God in His Kingdom – to join our prayers to their own in asking God for help and assistance. Such a saint we often refer to as our patron saint.

Here at St. Anne Parish we have adopted Anne, the mother of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ as our patroness. Her feast day in the liturgical calendar of the Catholic Church is July 26. Therefore, on that day we will celebrate the fact that God showed her such favor as to grace her with the strength to live a virtuous life dedicated to God and that we have a great champion in heaven speaking up on our behalf before God.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Stephen Eickhoff
Pastor