



CHURCH OF SAINT MARY
 510 N. Prospect Ave. • Alma, MI 48801
 Office (989)463-5370 • Fax (989)463-1369



MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH
 605 S. Franklin St. • St. Louis, MI 48880
 Office (989)681-5080 • Fax (989)681-2887

Dear Parish Family,

July 4, 2010

HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY! HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY!

It's been seven weeks since the new pastoral assignments were made public. I've made a point to get down to Alma at least once a week. In that time, I've met some of you at the school, on the playground, at the rectory, or in the office. Many of you have made the trip up to Beal City were I was last assigned. Others have met me on Facebook, or at graduation parties.

A bit of personal history: I am the middle of five siblings. I was born in Detroit, and my family has lived in Saint Clair Shores, Madison Heights, and Shelby Township - all in the Detroit area. I went to college at General Motors Institute in Flint, and then did graduate work at Purdue University. I've worked as an engineer for General Motors, Robert Bosch Corporation, and Ford Motor Company. I've also served in the United States Navy as an Airborne Cryptologic Linguist overseas in Japan and east Asia.

My studies for priesthood were funded in a large part through the GI Bill and the Navy College Fund. I studied philosophy in Detroit; theology at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio, and divinity at St. Paul Seminary in Minnesota. I was ordained a priest last year (2009) on June 5th.

My parents (Bill and Pat) are both still alive and in their mid-70s. Two of my brothers and my sister (Bill, John, and Laura) work for Ford and General Motors near Detroit. My youngest brother (Michael) is a psychologist and a lawyer and teaches at Notre Dame in South Bend.

With God's grace, and the intercession of St. Mary and St. Joseph I hope to serve our parish community despite my 'youth' as a priest. If you have Internet access, I encourage you to GOOGLE me!

Let us resolve to pray for each other every day! God bless you!

Fr. David

Word of the Week

Angelus

The Angelus is an ancient prayer in honor of the Incarnation. It is repeated three times a day - ideally at the sound of a bell. There are three verses and responses, three Hail Mary's and a concluding prayer. The Angelus is recited morning, noon and evening, following the rhythm of the day. The Angelus as we know it was first formulated in 1612.

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| <i>V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.</i> | <i>R. And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.</i> | <i>Hail Mary, full of grace ...</i> |
| <i>V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.</i> | <i>R. Be it done unto me according to Thy word.</i> | <i>Hail Mary, full of grace ...</i> |
| <i>V. And the Word was made flesh.</i> | <i>R. And dwelt among us.</i> | <i>Hail Mary, full of grace ...</i> |
| <i>V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.</i> | <i>R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.</i> | |

Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

JULY – THE MONTH OF THE MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD

The month of July is dedicated to the Most Precious Blood of the Redeemer. Supreme homage is given to the Sacred Blood. As we adore the Sacred Heart, because it is the Heart of Jesus, who is God, so we adore the Most Precious Blood.

The Blood of Jesus is the fountain of salvation. Each drop that flowed from the wounds of the Savior is a pledge of man's eternal salvation. All races of the earth have been ransomed, and all individuals, who will allow the saving power of the Sacred Blood to be applied to their soul, are heirs of heaven. St. John Chrysostom calls the Precious Blood "the savior of souls"; St. Thomas Aquinas, "the key to heaven's treasures"; St. Ambrose, "pure gold of ineffable worth"; St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi, "a magnet of souls and pledge of eternal life". The sins of humanity, in their number, in their offense to the Supreme Being, in the effects on transgressors, are immense; yet, the Precious Blood of Jesus is not frightened by numbers, it has in Itself the power to appease an angered God and to heal wounded creatures.

The Precious Blood is a cleansing bath. Unlike all other blood, which stains, the Blood of Jesus washes clean and white. According to the words of St. John, in the Apocalypse, the Angels wonder, and the question is asked: "These that are clothed in white robes, who are they?" The Lord answers: "These are they that have washed their robes, and have made them white in the Blood of the Lamb." For no other reason did the Precious

Blood flow but to regain for the souls of humanity the beautiful dress of innocence, and, once regained, to preserve it throughout life and into eternity.

The Blood of the Savior is a well of consolation for troubled hearts. Can anyone, confidently, look at the Sacred Blood trickling down from the Cross without taking courage to carry on, in spite of the difficulties which are the common lot of all? One glance at the Cross must be able to drive away fear. And, another, must be able to instill trust in Him who did not rest until the last drop, mingled with water, flowed out of an opened Heart. He, who was willing to do so much for us, must be willing to overlook and forget the frailties which they deeply regret; He must be willing to come to their assistance when harassed, to defend them when tempted, to comfort them when afflicted. The Blood of Jesus must be for Christians what the north-star is to sailors.

Would that all people on earth honored the Precious Blood in the manner in which they who are in heaven give honor and praise and thanksgiving! They proclaim that It purchased the glory which they enjoy. Without It, they would have remained slaves of Satan and outcasts from the eternal mansions of God. Let us profess that we owe to the Sacred Blood of Jesus all that we have in this life, and that to It we shall owe all that we shall enjoy in a better and eternal life!

Adapted from: *Heavenly Friends*, by Rosalie Marie Levy

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Saint Anthony Zaccaria

July 5

Anthony Zaccaria's mother became a widow at 18 and devoted herself to the spiritual education of her son. He became a medical doctor at 22 and, while working among the poor of his native Cremona in Italy, was attracted to the religious apostolate. He renounced his rights to any future inheritance, worked as a catechist and was ordained a priest at the age of 26. Called to Milan in a few years, he laid the foundations of three religious congregations.

His holiness moved many to reform their lives but, as with all saints, it also moved many to oppose him. While on a mission of peace, he became seriously ill and was brought home for a visit to his mother. He died at Cremona at the age of 36.



Saint Maria Goretti

July 6

Maria Goretti was the daughter of a poor Italian tenant farmer, had no chance to go to school, never learned to read or write. She

made her First Communion not long before her death.

On a hot afternoon in July, Maria was sitting at the top of the stairs of her house, mending a shirt. She was not quite 12 years old. A cart stopped outside, and a neighbor, Alessandro, 18 years old, ran up the stairs. He seized her and pulled her into a bedroom. She struggled and tried to call for help. "No, God does not wish it," she cried out. "It is a sin. You would go to hell for it." Alessandro began striking at her blindly with a long dagger.

She was taken to a hospital. Her last hours were marked by simple compassion—concern about where her mother would sleep, forgiveness of her murderer and her devout welcoming of her last Holy Communion. She died about 24 hours after the attack.

Her murderer was sentenced to 30 years in prison. For a long time he was unrepentant and surly. One night he had a dream or vision of Maria, gathering flowers and offering

them to him. His life changed. When he was released after 27 years, his first act was to go and beg the forgiveness of Maria's mother.



Saint Augustine Zhao Rong, et al

July 9

Christianity arrived in China by way of Syria in the 600s. Depending on China's relations with the outside world, Christianity over the centuries was free to grow or was forced to operate secretly.

The 120 martyrs in this group died between 1648 and 1930. Most of them were born in China and were children, parents, catechists or laborers, ranging from nine years of age to 72; including 4 native Chinese priests.

Augustine Zhao Rong was a Chinese soldier who accompanied Bishop John Gabriel Taurin Dufresse to his martyrdom. Augustine was baptized and not long after ordained a priest. He was martyred in 1815.

These 120 martyrs were all canonized in Rome on October 1, 2000.