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Dear Parish Family,

July 11, 2010

Congratulations to Megan and Paul Petrella who were married at Saint Mary Church last weekend. Let us offer our prayers for a lifetime of marital bliss.

It has been a scorcher the past week! Thanks to the many parishioners who came by to water the flowers and plants outside the rectory; and to those who contributed additional flowers. My strategy is: if there's dirt, let's plant something!

You may notice the daily Mass schedule has expanded. Over the summer and into the fall, we may tweak the times on certain days; but for now, it's Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 9:00 am, and 12 noon on Wednesday at Saint Mary; and 9:00 am on Wednesday at Mount Saint Joseph.

On the back, I've attached an outline of the postures during the Mass. I'd like us to try to assume the postures that the Church asks. I think we're already at the 90-95% mark. I hope the chart is helpful.

Let us continue to pray for each other through the intercession of our two patron saints: Our Lady and Saint Joseph! God bless you!

*Fr. David*

## *Word of the Week*

### **Immaculate Conception**

The Immaculate Conception is the conception of the Virgin Mary without any stain ("*immacula*" in Latin) of original sin. It is one of the four marian dogmas. Under this aspect Mary is sometimes called the *Immaculata* (the Immaculate One), particularly in artistic contexts.

The dogma states that, from the first moment of her existence, Mary was preserved by God from the lack of sanctifying grace that afflicts mankind and that she was instead filled with divine grace. Furthermore, she lived a life completely free from sin. Mary's immaculate conception should not be confused with the doctrines of the virginal conception of her son Jesus, known as the Annunciation and the Virgin Birth.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception, celebrated on December 8, was established as a universal feast in 1476 by Pope Sixtus IV. He did not define the doctrine as a dogma, but the existence of the feast was a strong indication of official Church teaching on the Immaculate Conception.

The Immaculate Conception was solemnly defined as a dogma by Pope Pius IX in his constitution *Ineffabilis Deus* on 8 December 1854. The Church teaches that the dogma is supported by Scripture as well as either directly or indirectly by the writings of Church Fathers such as Irenaeus of Lyons and Ambrose of Milan. In 1904 Pope Saint Pius X also addressed the issue in his Marian encyclical *Ad Diem Illum*, on the Immaculate Conception.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is a Holy Day of Obligation, and is a public holiday in most Catholic countries. Saint Mary Church in Alma is more properly known as Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception; meaning that our parish's patronage is under the title of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception.

*O St. Joseph whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the Throne of God, I place in you all my interests and desires. O St. Joseph do assist me by your powerful intercession and obtain for me from your Divine Son all spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ, Our Lord; so that having engaged here below your Heavenly power I may offer my Thanksgiving and Homage to the most Loving of Fathers. O St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you and Jesus asleep in your arms. I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press him in my name and kiss His fine Head for me, and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls, pray for us. Amen.*

# HUMILITY AND THE EUCHARIST

The most popular book in the world, after the *Bible*, is *The Imitation of Christ*. Since it was published in the early fifteenth century, it has deeply influenced the spirituality of millions of believing Christians. Its basic theme is that, since Jesus Christ is true God and true man, by imitating Christ's humanity, we become more and more like Christ, who is God.

We commonly associate the imitation of Christ by following the example He gave us during His mortal and visible stay in Palestine two thousand years ago. However, as the great Eucharistic saints make clear, we are also to imitate Christ in the Holy Eucharist. After all, that is one reason why He instituted this sacrament. By reflecting on the virtues which the glorified Savior manifests in the Eucharist, we are inspired to imitate Him now living on earth in the sacrament of His love.

Before we go any further, let us be very clear in understanding that the whole Christ, in the fullness of His divinity and humanity, is among us in what we casually call the Real Presence. It is the same identical Jesus who was conceived in the womb of His Mother, who was born in Bethlehem, who lived for some thirty years in Palestine, who died on the cross on the first Good Friday, who rose from the dead on Easter Sunday, and who is now seated at the right hand of His heavenly Father.

This now glorified Jesus is living among us as the primary source of the grace we need to reach our celestial destiny.

There are three forms of the sacrament of the Eucharist, as Real Presence, as the Sacrifice of the Mass, and as Holy Communion. We are to imitate the Eucharistic Christ on each of these three levels and obtain from Him the power we need to become more holy, which means to become more Christlike.

We know what humility is. It is the virtue that keeps a person from reaching beyond himself. It is the virtue that restrains the unholy desire for personal greatness and leads people to an orderly love of themselves based on a true appreciation of their position with respect to God and their neighbor. Humility recognizes one's total dependence on God. Yet humility is not only opposed to pride; it is also opposed to immoderate self-abjection, which would fail to recognize God's gifts and use them according to His divine will.

Humility is the one virtue that Christ most stressed in teaching us to follow Him. "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart." During His whole visible stay on earth, Jesus practiced humility to a degree beyond our comprehension. A good definition of the Incarnation is the humiliation of God. The Creator of the universe, without losing His infinity, assumed our humanity. The Creator became a creature.

Now we turn to Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. During His visible stay on earth, the Savior concealed His divinity so that only His humanity could be seen. But in the Holy Eucharist, He hides not only His divinity but His humanity as well.

No one has improved on the hymn, *Adoro Te*, of St. Thomas in which we pray: "Only the Godhead was hidden on the cross, but here the humanity is hidden as well. Yet I believe and acknowledge them both, and make the same request as did the repentant thief. I do not see the marks of the wounds, as Thomas did, yet I too own You as my God. Grant me to believe in You always more and more."

Whatever else is humility, it is not displaying the talents or the gifts we possess. Passage after passage in *The Imitation of Christ* tells us to be humble. Like the Savior, hidden in the Real Presence of the Eucharist, we literally hide what others may see and praise. Says A' Kempis, "this is the highest science, truly to know ourselves." And again St. Bernard, "Humility is the mother of salvation."

*Excerpted from Imitating Christ in the Eucharist by Fr. John A. Hardon, S.J.*

*Come let us bow down in worship; let us kneel before the LORD who made us. (Psalm 95:6)*

*At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:10)*

<b>THE POSTURE OF THE PEOPLE AT MASS</b>	
<b>INTRODUCTORY RITES</b>	
<i>From the beginning of Mass until after the Opening Prayer</i>	STAND
<b>LITURGY OF THE WORD</b>	
<b><i>During the First Reading, Responsorial Psalm, Second Reading (and Sequence)</i></b>	SIT
<i>From the Gospel Acclamation until the end of the Gospel</i>	STAND
<b><i>During the Homily</i></b>	SIT
<i>From the Profession of Faith until the end of the General Intercessions</i>	STAND
<b>LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST</b>	
<b><i>During the Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts (and the collection)</i></b>	SIT
<i>When the priest says "Pray my brothers and sisters..." until the completion of the Prayer Over the Gifts</i>	STAND
<b><i>Eucharistic Prayer: Opening Dialogue, Preface, and Holy, Holy, Holy</i></b>	STAND
<i>Eucharistic Prayer: After the Holy, Holy, Holy until after the Great Amen</i>	KNEEL
<b><i>From the beginning of the Lord's Prayer until the completion of the Lamb of God</i></b>	STAND
<i>After the Lamb of God until the beginning of the Communion Procession</i>	KNEEL
<b><i>After receiving Communion</i></b>	KNEEL or SIT
<i>Prayer after Communion</i>	STAND
<b>CONCLUDING RITE</b>	
<i>Greeting, Blessing, Dismissal</i>	STAND