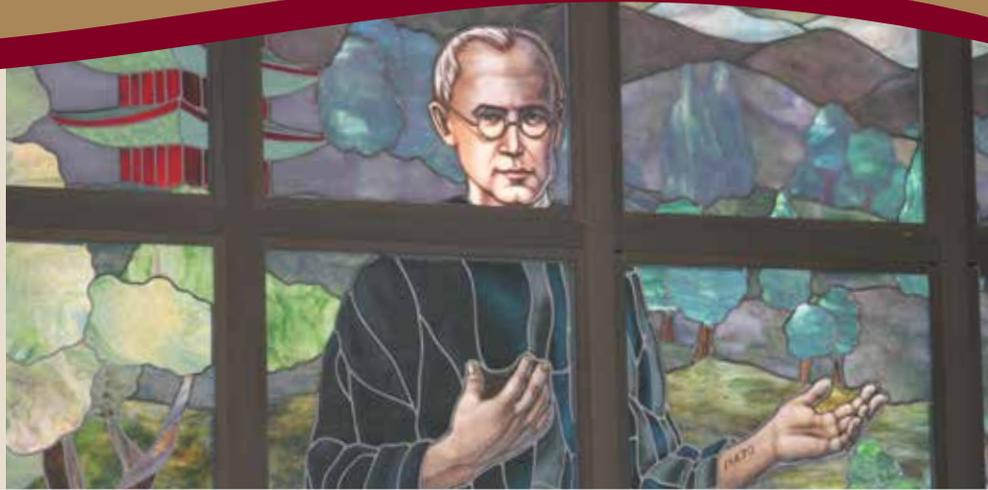


The MODERN SAINT



SAINT MAXIMILIAN KOLBE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Spending Time Before the Blessed Sacrament

“GOD DWELLS IN OUR MIDST, IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR.” – ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE

While most Catholics use traditional prayers as some part of their daily routine, the truth is that praying is something that may be hard to do. Life – the busyness of it – often gets in the way, and daily commitments, lack of habit and spiritual dryness are just some of the obstacles preventing us from having a spiritually meaningful prayer life. But when Jesus says, “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest” (Mt. 11:28), His words, spoken over 2,000 years ago, hold just as much meaning today as He invites each of us to come spend time with Him in Eucharistic Adoration where, away from the world’s distractions, we can come face-to-face with the reality of the Eucharist.

“As a Catholic, the True Presence of Christ – His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity – that is in the Eucharist is such an incredible gift,” says Kathy Hinger, who – along with Debby Kellner – coordinates the schedule for adoration times. “The only time Jesus asked the apostles for anything was when He asked them to stay with Him one hour, and with adoration we can do this one thing – be with the Lord.”

If there was any question about the incredible influence the Eucharist can have in our lives, just look

to the saints – Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who will be canonized in September, said that time spent with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the best time you can spend on earth; St. Catherine of Siena wrote that the Eucharist was our celestial bread to strengthen us on our earthly pilgrimage; St. John Paul II said that the Word, which became flesh 2,000 years ago, is present today in the Eucharist; even our patron, St. Maximilian Kolbe, had a great desire to institute Perpetual Adoration – something he considered to be “the most important activity” that could not only change us, but also change the face of the world.

What’s more, Eucharistic Adoration is not only transformative to us personally, but also as a parish, as we have worked to make Perpetual Adoration a reality. What began as something that was once held in the basement of the pastor’s house has now grown so that, today, Perpetual Adoration – in which Christ is present in the tabernacle – is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Additionally, each Thursday during the Rite of Exposition, the Blessed Sacrament is



exposed following the 8:30 a.m. Mass and remains so until 8 p.m. with the Rite of Benediction.

“Having Perpetual Adoration here means that, in a very tangible way, our parish is praying unceasingly,” Kathy says. “The Holy Spirit is alive in our parish, and adoration has given us many fruits – both seen and unseen. There are those who have committed to a particular hour, those who come in when they can, and entire ministries who have adopted an hour. One of the best things is that, in the chapel, we have a binder listing people in the parish so that everyone is prayed for by name.”

Of course, when sitting in a quiet chapel, some may wonder how to fill the time. But Kathy says there isn’t a formula – some read the Bible, pray the

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The MODERN SAINT

A Letter From Our Pastor



FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP – Part Two

My dear brothers and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ,

As I shared with you in my pastor's letter in the March 2016 *Modern Saint* (which you can re-read on our website, www.saint-max.org), voting is one of the many responsibilities and duties we have in exercising our citizenship. As Catholic Christians, exercising this right takes on a unique dimension. Since 1975, the bishops of the United States have approved statements about *faithful citizenship*. We plan to have bulletin articles (and more!) in the fall before the election to aid everyone in continuing to form consciences in accordance with God's truth and Catholic doctrine. Only with well-formed consciences can we as Catholics properly evaluate policy positions, party platforms, and candidates' promises and actions. All of these must be considered in the light of the Gospel and through the lens of the teachings of our Church. Of particular interest among many such topics is religious freedom.

Fifty years ago, Vatican II promulgated its declaration on religious freedom, *Dignitatis Humanae*. Today,

religious freedom is seriously restricted in countries around the world. Here in our country, much work is being done to protect our First Amendment right to religious freedom from erosion. As I write this article in mid-April, the religious freedom case of the Little Sisters of the Poor is being considered by the U.S. Supreme Court. The protection of our right to religious liberty is critical to every person's fundamental freedom. To that extent, a new video from the USCCB regarding religious freedom is on our website – it is worth every second of its 9 ½- minute length to watch!

Based on then-current events in our country (the consequences of which have since developed and remain very pertinent now) in a speech to the American bishops during their *ad limina* visit to Rome on Jan. 19, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI highlighted the need for the American government to respect the religious "freedom of worship" and "freedom of conscience" amidst "radical secularism." Subsequently, the USCCB launched the first ever "Fortnight for Freedom" in 2012. Dioceses and parishes throughout the country were charged with arranging special events to highlight the importance of defending religious freedom. This year marks the fifth "Fortnight for Freedom" always occurring from June 21 – the vigil of the Memorial of Sts. John Fisher and Thomas More – to July 4, Independence Day.

What is the "Fortnight for Freedom" all about? It is a USCCB-led campaign calling upon U.S. Catholics to participate in a pledge to religious freedom and an



FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP

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appeal for the inclusion of a “conscience clause” for religious institutions and religious faithful to practice according to the moral tenets of one’s religious faith. (Let us not forget the Affordable Health Care Act, aka Obamacare, requires employers to provide health care insurance for their employees, including religious and charitable organizations and religiously affiliated hospitals and universities who must include coverage for contraception, sterilization and other forms of birth control.)

Some may wonder if such efforts are a violation of the separation of Church and state. Not at all – an important part of faithful citizenship is being involved in public forums and the governance of our nation! Let us remember the words of Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore at the observance of the first “Fortnight for Freedom” in 2012 – we must be “loyal Americans by being bold and courageous Catholics.” Please be attentive to the Sunday bulletin for the ways St. Max and the archdiocese will commemorate the 2016 “Fortnight for Freedom.” In particular, all are strongly encouraged this election year to come together with your fellow parishioners at the 9 a.m. Mass on Monday, July 4, to celebrate the Independence Day holiday, the last day of the 2016 “Fortnight for Freedom.”

That’s all for now. God bless one and all!



Fr. Geoffrey D. Drew, Pastor

To stay up to date and informed on Vatican news, check out the Official Vatican Network at www.news.va.



INTERNATIONAL PILGRIM VIRGIN STATUE

We will be privileged to once again welcome the International Pilgrim Virgin Statue to St. Maximilian Kolbe Church on Wednesday, July 6. This date is our 27th anniversary of our founding as a parish. With St. Maximilian Kolbe’s great devotion to the Blessed Mother, it is a very fitting way for us to remember our founding anniversary date. And even though it is two days after the “Fortnight for Freedom,” it is a day for us to pray for our nation to Mary – who, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, is patroness of the United States.

YEAR OF *Forgive All*



“The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2447). Throughout the Holy Year of Mercy, each month a work of mercy will be highlighted for both reflection and action.

Forgiving all injuries, a spiritual work of mercy, is an act of deep love to forgive all those who have injured us in any way, even deliberately. It is often an act of healing woundedness. All followers of Jesus exhibit such great love and forgiveness for one another in imitation of His great love and forgiveness, especially as He hung on the cross and forgave His enemies. The love of enemies is perhaps Jesus’ most demanding command and has been a trademark of Christianity since its inception. It seems pertinent to call to mind the words of the Lord’s Prayer in this regard, when we ask the Father to “forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

@ St. Max

Sacrament of Penance... and It's Not Even Advent or Lent!

Forgiving others may seem to be a choice we can make or not – but Sacred Scripture (especially in the Gospels telling of Jesus’ own earthly ministry) and Church experience make it very clear that we really do not have the choice not to forgive! “Do not judge and you will not be judged. Do not condemn and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven” (Luke 6:37). We are given such divine direction because God does not want anything to stand between us and Him – we cannot be truly and deliberately walking with our forgiving God when we are an unforgiving person.

There are many vehicles of God’s forgiveness – and God’s forgiveness is much more than any of these: In our tradition, the Sacrament of Penance is the most common conduit of receiving God’s forgiveness. But remember, baptism is also a sacrament of forgiveness, the forgiveness of original sin. The Church also teaches that the reception of Holy Communion “wipes away venial sins” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1394). And, the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick forgives sins if the sick person is not able to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance

(Catechism of the Catholic Church 1532). Can there be any doubt God wants to forgive us our sins when the celebration of four of our seven sacraments does just that?

But how do we learn to forgive others? Very simply, we learn from God Himself. *We cannot forgive unless we are first forgiven.* When is the last time you went to the Sacrament of Penance? How often should you be celebrating this sacrament of God’s forgiving and healing love? Perhaps to get in a “regular habit” of confessing our sins, we might consider going to the Sacrament of Penance on or around our birthdays. Some schedule their annual physicals on or around their birthdays. Perhaps this *modus operandi* might be just as useful for our spiritual health as it is for our physical health.

Remember, our forgiveness of others does not justify the deed or the person. It does not provide God’s forgiveness for their actions, because only God can do that. While nothing can undo the past, we can do something about the condition of our own present and our future. Forgiving others makes a way for our own healing to begin.

MERCY

Injuries

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE – JUNE 2016

Individual Confessions

Thursday mornings after the 8:30 a.m. Mass

Thursday evenings at 6 p.m.

Saturday mornings after the 8:30 a.m. Mass

Saturday afternoons at 3 p.m.

@ Home

As we contemplate forgiveness of others, always remember...

- forgiveness isn't an event, it is a process!*
- forgiving others is a work of God within us, a gift you give – it is not a burden you bear.*
- clinging to hurt and anger, as real and as understandable as it may be, only harms us!*

- Identify someone whom you need to forgive or ask for forgiveness and pray for them.
- Pray for the courage, strength and desire you need to forgive those who have wronged you.
- Go out of your way to be positive to someone who has wronged you.
- Reach out – a phone call, written note, email, text – to someone who has wronged you.
- Celebrate the Sacrament of Penance individually or as a family.
- Think of things for which to be thankful about someone who has wronged you.
- Pray the *Our Father* as a family each day – occasionally talk about (and perhaps even repeat every once in a while) the words “*forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us*” reminding ourselves that we pray to God for His forgiveness to the degree we forgive others.
- Spend time in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament – a holy hour, a holy half hour or even a holy 10 minutes! While in the presence of Jesus Himself, ask Him to change your heart to be more like His forgiving heart.
- Make a daily examination of conscience, perhaps before bed as this is part of the Liturgy of the Hours every day during Night Prayer (Compline). We will hopefully begin to see both our need for forgiveness as well as opportunities to forgive others.
- Do random acts of kindness, especially for those who have wronged you.



A SAINT of MERCY – St. Maria Goretti

Born into an Italian farming family in 1890, Maria Goretti is one of the youngest saints to be canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. Her family, due to her father's death when she was 9 years old, had moved in with another local family. When Maria was not yet 12 years old, the 18-year-old son of the host family, Alessandro, attempted to rape her. Later, it was discovered that he had attempted sexual advances towards her prior to this. Telling her assailant she would rather die than submit to his sexual advances, he stabbed her with an awl 14 times. Taken to the nearest hospital, her injuries were beyond the doctors' help. Before dying, she forgave Alessandro and said she wanted to see him in heaven with her. Unrepentant for his crime, Alessandro was arrested, convicted and jailed. After three years of imprisonment, he had a dream that he was in a garden where Maria gave him lilies which immediately burned in his hands. When he woke, he was a changed man. When he was released 27 years later, he went directly to Maria's mother and begged her forgiveness, which she gave, saying, "If my daughter can forgive him, who am I to withhold forgiveness?" Maria Goretti was declared a saint in 1950 by Pope Pius XII. Alessandro, who after his imprisonment had become a lay brother of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin, was present at her canonization. Her feast day is July 6.

TAKING THE CHALLENGE, GROWING CLOSER TO GOD

It's happened to a lot of us. You get into a conversation with a non-Catholic friend or co-worker and before you know it, they've quoted more Bible verses than you can count, and you're left feeling like Scripture is just a "Protestant thing."

"As Catholics, we should be reading Scripture," says Zack Hinger,

who works in Evangelization, Catechesis, and Youth and Young Adult Ministry at St. Max. "A lot of times, as Catholics, we push Scripture off as 'Oh, that's a Protestant thing.' We want to remind and reclaim that, as Catholics, we are rooted in Scripture and it should direct our lives. God speaks to us through His Word."

With this in mind, the 1% Challenge was launched this past January, with the goal of encouraging parishioners to spend 15 minutes a day, growing in their relationship with the Lord through His Word. For those who have already taken the challenge, it has truly made a difference.

"Before, I viewed Scripture as something that was part of the Mass or to read for a few minutes a day," says parishioner Dave Schroeder. "Now, [Scripture] is the way Jesus speaks to us."

"I thought the Bible wasn't really important," says Noah Borgemenke, a seventh-grader who took the challenge. "Now, [I think] it's a very vital piece to every person's life, especially mine. The Bible carries the words that Jesus said, and every day when I'm reflecting, I think, 'Am I really following the words of Jesus?'"

For Anna Sejas, an 8th grader who took the challenge, she has found that making prayer and Scripture a priority amidst her busy schedule has strengthened her relationship with God.

"I have really grown in my appreciation for the Bible," Anna says. "Before I started doing the 1% Challenge, I almost never read the Bible. I felt like I had too much to do, and I was too stressed out to take the time to read it. But now, I think of the Bible as a super easy, great way to stay close to Jesus."

"My relationship with God has grown a lot since I've started the 1% Challenge," she continues. "I feel way closer to Him than I used to and I feel more comfortable praying, too. Now, I can talk to Him as though I'm talking to a friend."

Parishioners taking the 1% Challenge are encouraged to use a form of prayer called Lectio Divina – "Divine Reading" – and sign up to receive daily Scripture passages via email.

"Through the Scriptures, God can speak to us," Zack says. "Lectio Divina is a way to [listen] that is a lot more reliable than just waiting for God to come down."

"I usually read the Scripture about three or four times so that I fully understand it," Noah says. "Then I think, 'What is Jesus really trying to tell me?' And finally, I spend the last couple of minutes in quiet prayer, just talking to God."

"I started reading the daily Scripture passage before bed," Dave says. "I follow the guidance offered by the parish, reflecting, re-reading, and feeling the passage. Some mornings, I would wake up very early with very clear thoughts about the passage and its meaning in my life. And sometimes, there were actions that I needed to take, and sometimes, messages I needed to share."

With over 600 people signed up for the daily email, the group of parishioners participating in the 1% Challenge and cultivating a love for God's Word is continuing to grow. Anna encourages others to sign up to take the challenge.

"The 1% Challenge is life-changing," she says. "Jesus isn't expecting you to spend hours in prayer – He's encouraging you to do at least one percent of your day, 15 minutes."



For many who have decided to take the 1% Challenge, it has been a life-changing experience.



Beginning in January, parishioners began committing to spend one percent of their day – 15 minutes – in prayer and reading God's Word.

If you want to grow closer to God through Scripture and are ready to take the 1% Challenge, please sign up at <http://www.saint-max.org/takethechallenge>.

“Dedicated to Sharing God’s Healing Love”

ST. MAXIMILIAN’S LIVING WATERS PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Sixteen years ago, Cindy Schneeman joined St. Maximilian Kolbe. Shortly thereafter, she found herself drawn to the ministry of making prayer shawls – it was a wonderful way that she could use her talents of knitting and crocheting to give comfort to others.

“Living Waters Prayer Shawl Ministry is dedicated to sharing God’s healing love,” Cindy says. “We share His love through the shawls we create by the work of our hands while praying for those who will receive them during times of sorrow, as well as times of joy!”

The Living Waters Prayer Shawl Ministry was started by Sheila Munafa-Kanoza of Companions on a Journey and Gerda van Loveren about 15 years ago. The title of the ministry came from the praise and worship group with the same name.

“I found out about the ministry from the bulletin that said the members knit the shawls,” Cindy says. “I considered it, but didn’t join right away because I preferred to crochet. I kept being drawn to the article and decided to go to a meeting. And the rest, as they say, is history.”

Cindy soon discovered that the prayer shawls could be made by knitting or crocheting.

“A shawl can be finished in a few days if it is worked on a great deal,” Cindy says. “The yarn is mostly provided by generous donations of unused yarn or cash we use to purchase



Work of the Living Waters Prayer Shawl Ministry



Ministry members giving prayer shawls

the yarn, and we generally use our own needles or crochet hooks.”

The members of this ministry meet four times a month on the first and third Wednesday from 9:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m., and on the second and fourth Thursday evenings from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. All gatherings are in classroom 6. The ministry has gathering times in the day and in the evening to accommodate more individuals.

Cindy notes that the members

especially enjoy sharing time and fellowship together during their meetings.

“We begin and end our meetings with prayer, and I would encourage anyone who has thought of checking into the ministry to do so,” she says.

Anyone may receive a prayer shawl. They are generally given to persons recovering from a surgery or illness, suffering from a disease, grieving a loss of a loved one, celebrating a wedding or the arrival of a child, or to members of the military and their families.

Shawls can be requested through the parish office. If the ministry members receive a personal request, they pray for the individual by name while making the shawl.

“We have gotten many ‘thank you’ notes from persons who have received prayer shawls, telling us how much they have been comforted by the shawls and the prayers that were said for them,” Cindy says. “They are also where some of our donations come from.”

If you are looking for a way to share fellowship and give comfort to others, come by one of the Living Waters Prayer Shawl Ministry gatherings and occupy your hands with “sharing God’s healing love.”

“Everyone is welcome to join, whether you know how to knit or crochet,” Cindy says. “We will do our best to teach anyone how to make a prayer shawl.”

If you would like more information about St. Maximilian’s Living Waters Prayer Shawl Ministry, please reach out to Cindy Schneeman at 513-479-6226 or Gerda van Loveren at 513-777-2995.

HAVE YOU MOVED, OR DO YOU HAVE A NEW PHONE NUMBER OR NEW EMAIL ADDRESS?
Please contact the office at 777-4322 ext. 101 or culm@saint-max.org to give us an update!

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Rosary or offer up intentions. Sometimes, adoration simply allows us to rest in the Lord’s Presence and to have that opportunity to reflect on our response to God’s call. In short, the reality of Christ’s Presence is that we grow to learn to see Him in others, and for others to see Him in us – it’s a time to listen and ask ourselves, “What is God saying to me?”

“When I go to the Adoration Chapel, I really don’t have a routine,” says Kathy, who attends an hour of Adoration every Thursday. “Sometimes I journal, sometimes I let Scripture speak to me, sometimes I sit in silence, and sometimes I pray the Rosary or meditate

on the passion. It’s different every time I go, but I am always in awe. In the Latin Vulgate Bible, the Eucharist is translated as our super-substantial bread, and when Jesus tells us to ‘do this in remembrance of me,’ I can’t comprehend leaving Him alone. We have this incredible gift, and it’s right there before us.”

In the end, when Jesus asked His apostles for one hour – not for an activity, but simply for companionship – our parish is responding in a very real and visible way. Whether it is for one hour, or for a few minutes on a lunch break, Perpetual Adoration offers us the opportunity to be in the presence of our Lord.

If you would like to sign up for a specific hour, please visit the parish website at www.saint-max.org and click on the “Perpetual Adoration” link, the icon with the praying hands at the bottom of the home page.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Sat. Vigil: 4:30 p.m. | **Sun.:** 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. | **Wed.:** 6:30 a.m., **Mon. - Sat.:** 8:30 a.m.
Sacrament of Penance: Saturdays after the 8:30 a.m. Mass & 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.,
Thursdays after the 8:30 a.m. Mass & 6:00 - 6:45 p.m.