



ST. AUGUSTINE PARISH

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10 June 2020

My dear friends:

Praised be Jesus Christ! Now and forever!

By the time that you receive this letter, we will have already celebrated the Funeral Rites for our beloved 11th Pastor, Father Leo C. Schmidt, and buried him with his parents. For those of you who hadn't heard, the Good Lord called His faithful servant and priest home to Heaven around 11:15pm on Saturday, June 6, 2020... in the shadow of St. Augustine Parish celebrating its 150th Anniversary. Father Leo served as the pastor from 1992 until his retirement from active priestly ministry at the age of 86! in 2015. At the 5:00pm Sunday Vigil Mass, we offered our prayers for Father, that he would have a peaceful and holy death. The Lord answered our prayers; and the proof came on Sunday morning when Father Michael opened the gym to prepare for the 9:00am Mass. Many of our parishioners will be familiar with the purplish/pink balloon that has been stuck on the gym ceiling for at least three (3) years. That balloon... in the shape of a heart... was resting on the floor, directly in front of the Altar! I firmly believe that this was God reminding us just how much He loves us in the midst of our sorrow; and just how much He loves Father Leo; and just how much Father Leo loved St. Augustine Parish!

Father's family has kindly asked me as his successor at St. Augustine to preach the Vigil Service of his funeral. As I sit here preparing for that homily, two thoughts come to my mind: 1. "Not to us, O Lord, but to your name give the glory..." (Psalm 115); 2. "To fall in love with God is the greatest romance; to seek Him the greatest adventure; to find Him the greatest human achievement." (St. Augustine) Father Leo would hang and shake his head if he could hear us tell the stories of our great a man and priest he was; for his life was not about him... it was about Jesus! From the moment he awoke, to the moment he closed his eyes in sleep, his life preached the Good News of the Gospel. What a lesson we can all learn. And Father Leo's life was indeed one well lived... it was one of romance, and adventure and achievement, because he had fallen in love with God, and sought after Him, and indeed found Him! Jesus said: "I have come that you may have life and have it more abundantly." Father Leo lived an abundant life! May he now rest in the eternal peace and joy of His Lord, whom he served so very well.

For those who were not able to attend Father's funeral, we will have his holy cards to be passed out in the parish... don't worry, I asked for a bunch.

We have started using a new electronic communication program here in the parish called "Flocknote". To date, 75 members of the parish have signed up... thank you! If you haven't yet done so, I would strongly encourage your participation. You need only a cell phone or an email address. If you are going to use email, please go online and login to www.flocknote.com; if you want to use a cell phone, simply text **RestlessHeart** (one word) to **84576**.

The restoration of the church building continues... it is moving a little faster than a couple weeks ago, but still not fast enough for the pastor!! The new hardwood floor going up to the high altar has been installed and stained... thanks Dale Farrell! The sanding of the Nave floor continues... 106 years of varnish is giving the sander a little trouble... but it's looking good. They hope to stain before the end of the week.

On a very positive note, we received the ornamentation for the Altar of Sacrifice that will be placed in the "privacy screen". It is of the mother pelican and her young. For those who do not understand the symbolism, it represents the Eucharist. When a mother pelican cannot find food for her young, she will pluck off some of her own flesh to provide nourishment for



her children... just what the Lord Jesus does for us in offering us His Sacred Body and Precious Blood. Although you cannot see it in this letter, it is in color!

We should know if/when the ambo will ship from NYC tomorrow. Everything was ready to go, and then the police shut down the streets near the closed church it is coming from because of civil unrest... sigh!



In my last letter I shared with you the sketch of St. Monica which will go in the High Altar. Here is one of the other sketches... this time of St. Ambrose. St. Ambrose was the Bishop of Milan. St. Augustine heard him preach and was so moved by his eloquence and knowledge that he sought to know more about the Catholic faith. In time Ambrose would baptize Augustine, bringing him into the Church and preparing him to be the great saint we know today.

This is the last week to purchase Raffle Tickets. I am grateful to everyone who has purchased some and who have been promoting it. We hope to sell a total of 4000, but I don't know if we are going to make it... we need to sell a lot this week to make that happen.

This week you should have received a letter from Bishop Foys pertaining to the DPAA. This annual diocesan collection was postponed as you know because of the COVID-19 pandemic. We once again have a great opportunity to support and participate in the life of the larger local Church of Covington through this collection. Our goal for the collection is around \$24,000. This is a great opportunity to help feed the poor, shelter the homeless, council the hurting, provide medicine for the sick, teach children, and even help pay parish bills. While we should be happy and excited to look beyond ourselves (as the Parish of St. Augustine) and love our neighbor; in a real way much of this money comes back to us in the form of grants. The parish, the school and the City Heights Outreach all receive monies from the DPAA. I have already made my pledge, maybe you have too... if so, THANK YOU! If not, would you please make a

sacrificial gift to the 2020 DPAA? Enclosed with this letter is a pledge card... you can drop it in the collection "basket" or mail it to the parish office or the diocesan offices. Remember that every dollar we collect over our goal comes straight back to us!

This past Sunday, Father Michael baptized Christian Duncan! We welcome Christian into our beloved Catholic faith, and congratulate and thank his parents Nick and Angela who, along with his godparents, have made a commitment to raise him to love the Lord our God with his whole heart, mind and being!

A quick word about the civil unrest that is occurring across our nation... I've been working on gather a number of quotes to share with the parish through FlockNote each day and recently came across this one from our patron: "What is perfection in love? Love your enemies in such a way that you would desire to make them your brothers." What is our biggest problem in the United States at this time? It's not racism or social inequality or police brutality or any of the many politically motivated "garbage" you hear from the Left and the Right... it is a lack of LOVE! Love of God and love of neighbor! How do we fix the underlying problems that the devil is inciting? Simple... we seek the good of the other as other... in other words we MUST love. May we be the example to our children, our neighbors and our enemies... may we all truly be brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus.

I'll end with a final word about Father Leo. When choosing the prayer for his holy card, Father's family was concerned that the prayer was too simple and familiar... but it was one that he cherished. Join me in praying it now for him: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the **hour of our death!**
Amen.

Prayers and Blessings Always!

Very Reverend Daniel L. Schomaker
Pastor