



Mission Matters

St. Mary Magdalen Reformed catholic Mission

January 2009

Volume III Issue I



Weekly Sunday Mass Returns

Beginning Sunday, February 15th, 2008, Fr. John Midura and Sr. Joan Lord will celebrate Mass (Holy Eucharist) at 6:30pm in the Masonic Temple, 172 Church Street, North Adams, MA. During the service a special healing blessing with laying on of hands will be performed by request. Please also offer any special intentions for immediate prayer and thanksgiving. Afterwards, coffee and light pastries will be served during which time Fr. John can further explain what Reformed Catholicism is and its relationship with Interfaith Christianity.

St. Mary Magdalen's offers the grace of God's sacraments to anyone who requests it. We believe that a person has personally reconciled himself with God in order to receive His infinite love. "Do not judge lest ye be judged." During each Mass we share the sacrament of Holy Communion at Christ's table with anyone who is baptized in Christ or believes in his message of love for the Creator and our brothers and sisters.

Dates & Events

- January 1st—New Year's Day
Blessed Virgin Mary, Holy Name
- January 4th—Epiphany of the Lord
- January 11th—Baptism of Our Lord
- January 25th—St. Paul Conversion
- February 3rd—St. Blaise Day,
Patron of Sore Throats
- February 15th—Sunday Mass 6:30pm
- February 22nd—Sunday Mass 6:30pm
- February 25th—Ash Wednesday



"Reformed Catholic" a Truly Inclusive Independent Movement

By Fr. John E. Midura, RCCI

Many times over the course of my calling as a Reformed Catholic priest, the question that eventually presents itself is "What is Reformed Catholic?" Depending on how much time is available, I usually start by saying "We're a new and improved version of Christ's universal church." We model ourselves after the very early church, before all the regality and heraldry that was imposed by Roman Emperor Constantine and the Council of Nicea in 325 AD.—a time when clergy were very close to the congregations they served, a time when men and women served together as Christ's shepherds on earth.

Our leadership is episcopal in format with a Presiding Bishop and assisting bishops who regularly convene with all clergy. We are truly open and inclusive providing a place to grow, a place to heal, and a place to return to the seven sacraments. With us, people can live a full spiritual and liturgical life, regardless of marital status, gender, political beliefs, sexual orientation, finances, or matters of conscience. We are a ministry of Christ's reconciling love. We carry this ministry one step further, "Do not judge, lest ye be judged." As an international denomina-

tion we are fully ecumenical and fully Catholic in all aspects. As a legitimate Church, our clergy possess valid Holy Orders and our Presiding Bishop Gerald J. Clements was consecrated in direct Apostolic succession to the Apostle Peter through the Carlos Duarte-Costa line. All of our clergy, including myself, are consecrated through the this line of succession. We are considered independent catholics, born again from the ancient church that our Lord Jesus Christ founded. We are completely independent of the Roman Catholic Church. We respect the Vatican and the Pope who is considered the first bishop equal among bishops, but are not governed by it.

Within the Reformed Catholic Church International (RCCI) are several independent ministries—Emmanuel Ministries, Desert Ministries, Married Life Ministries, St. Benedict Interfaith Christian Fellowship, Order of Contemporary Benedictines, St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Mission, the Church of St. John of the Cross, Unus Deus Ministries, Sts. Sergius & Bacchus Mission, and Franciscans of Divine Mercy. Each ministry is operated by one

ONE GOD— Many Names / ONE SON— Many Paths / ONE TRUTH— Many Faiths

of our clerics who also serve as chaplains at Brookhaven Hospice, Community Veterans Support House, Taunton State Hospital, Federal Emergency Management Association, Mass Support, and Taunton Police Department. Several of our clergy are members of Freemasonry and serve as chaplains and other officer positions. Each of our clergy are self-supporting, taking no wage or stipend for doing God's work. As for myself, I am employed as an executive for Goodwill Industries in Berkshire County. All donations and honorariums are given to St. Mary Magdalen's for church expenses and support of our Mother Teresa Fund for the Working Poor. We contribute to local charities in support of their individual endeavors and also provided seed money to help start Goodwill's Food Pantry that now supplies care bags to almost 100 families each month.

When experiencing our Mass, you will notice many similarities with some differences. Many Christian denominations have developed wonderful liturgies which we have the freedom to incorporate into our services. We may chose prayers from a multitude of faiths, Jewish, Islam, Native American or Buddhist. We believe there are inspired lessons from God in all faiths. But most importantly, we firmly believe that everyone should fully participate as we always provide the complete liturgy and readings for every service. We also include open reconciliation (confession) at each Mass. It is fully recognized that men and women do not need a priest to act on their behalf or intervene when speaking to God. Private reconciliation is offered, though, for anyone who prefers personal and private consultation.

The seven sacraments are fully imbedded within RCCI doctrine. Baptism is the wellspring of life with Christ. Reconciliation provides a means to communicate with God and prepare oneself to receive His graces. Holy Communion is the way by which we spiritually join God through His incarnate Son. Confirmation is the means by which we reaffirm our life-long commitment to Christ's message and commandments. Holy Matrimony joins two people together as one with the loving embrace of Christ. Holy Orders are given to those men and women called by the Holy Spirit to serve God. And lastly, Extreme Unction, the final preparation of God's earthly creation to be welcomed into His kingdom at the hand of Christ.

Although we serve all of God's people, we are particularly sensitive to those who have been cast aside by other faiths, marginalized because they did not provide an exact fit. RCCI does not own property that could cloud its ability to effectively do God's work. Some of our clergy serve congregationally controlled churches that have better opportunity to make decisions about their own community and parish.

It is with great joy, anticipation and humility that we start our services at the Masonic Lodge in North Adams. Please join us on a Sunday evening, beginning February 15th, 2008 for refreshment for the soul and later, nourishment for the body as we share Christ's table at Mass and then fellowship with each other. Please know that we are always available for baptisms, weddings, last rites and funerals. Additionally, we can also offer Mass, Novenas, Rosary recitations or other prayer services at alternate locations for those who cannot travel a distance. And finally, we provide House Blessings throughout the year for new and currently occupied homes.

I hope you found this article enlightening and I pray that each of you find comfort and happiness with your own personal faith of choice.

May God bless and keep you safe and healthy during this hopeful and eventful new year.

Rev. Fr. John E. Midura, RCCI

Links of Interest

Reformed catholic Church International

www.rccine.org

Church of Interfaith Christians

www.interfaithchristians.org

Married Life Ministries

www.marriedlifeministries.com

The Gospel of Inclusion and the New Dimensions Ministry of Bishop Carlton Pearson

www.newdimensions.us

www.inclusioninternational.com

www.bishoppearson.com

Bishop Carlos Duarte Costa

www.catholic-canc.us/costa.html

Some Links of Interest are not necessarily the beliefs of this mission but are intended to present other points of view in man's constant search for the Truth.

St. Mary Magdalen Reformed Catholic Mission

42 Burt Street

Adams, MA 01220

413-743-3987

www.mary-magdalen-mission.org

Rev.john@mary-magdalen-mission.org

Thoughts on Adams Polish Catholic Community

By Fr. John Midura

Our dear brothers and sisters whose ancestors came to Adams from Poland are losing St. Stanislaus Kostka Church, the cornerstone of their community. Justifiably upset, many valiant pleas have been published in the local newspapers by loyal and dedicated parishioners hoping to encourage a change in the decision to merge with another parish. My own heart aches for them and the loss of a beautiful building that will only survive in photos and memories.

Both of my parents were born of Polish immigrants. I have an ancestral tie to St. Stan's through my maternal grandfather, Joseph Dziejczak. Arriving from Pstragowa in the Galicia section of Poland, he came to Adams and married Frances Presnal in 1906 in St. Stan's. Unfortunately, Frances died a year and half later. In 1911, he married my grandmother, Zofia Dziejczak (same last name but no relation) in Holyoke, MA at Mater Dolorosa Church where our entire family was schooled and religiously served in the Polish tradition by Franciscan priests and nuns. Interestingly, we believe that Frances and Zofia were cousins as both of their mothers' shared the same maiden name of Stawarsz. And, it was customary for a young widower to marry someone else in the family. My own mother, the youngest of thirteen, as a child remembers visiting a Ciotka in Adams, but can only recall row houses.

It is not my place to comment on the reasons for closing St. Stanislaus Church. That is better left to people more informed on both sides of the issue. However, I am deeply concerned about the Polish community in Adams losing its heritage and identity. The biggest part of Polish identity is religion and the manner in which we worship God through Jesus Christ and Our Holy Mother. I speak of this often with folks of other nationalities who cannot comprehend the concept of nationality and religion as being joined together as one entity, yet that is exactly Polish Catholicism. It is a marriage of life that has incorporated religion into itself. One cannot exist identifiably without the other. One cannot separate the Jew from Judaism, the Arab from Islam nor the Greeks or Russians from their Orthodox denominations. We may become separated from our faith but it always lies within us. Apart from other parishes, Polish people developed their own ceremonies, liturgy and rich classical song echoing to the days of Chopin himself. We include those special prayers and ceremonies in everyday and holiday life at home. I pray each day that the Polish Catholic community in Adams will preserve their ancient traditions.

Obituary—Common Sense

From the National Spiritual Alliance Newsletter

Author Unknown

Today, we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm, life isn't always fair, and maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting strategies (adults, not children are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of children being charged for misconduct for hugging a class mate; teens suspended from school for using mouth wash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened the condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job they themselves failed to do by teaching life's lessons and disciplining their children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer aspirin, sun lotion or a band-aid to a student; but could not inform the parents when a minor student became pregnant and wanted an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband; churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. He is survived by three stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, Someone Else Is to Blame, and I'm a Victim.

Not many attended the funeral because so few realized he was gone.

Point to Ponder!

The early bird may catch the worm but
it's the second mouse who gets the
cheese!

Various Quotes of Martin Luther King Jr. 1929-1968

- *Faith is taking the first step, even when you don't see the whole staircase.*
- *Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it. Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it. Hatred darkens life; love illuminates it.*
- *In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.*
- *Ten thousand fools proclaim themselves into obscurity, while one wise man forgets himself into immortality.*
- *I submit to you that if a man hasn't discovered something he will die for, he isn't fit to live.*
- *Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.*
- *Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men.*
- *The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.*
- *Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that.*
- *If we do not learn to live together as friends, we will die apart as fools.*
- *The old law of an eye for an eye leaves everyone blind. It destroys communities and makes humanity impossible. It creates bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers... In winning our freedom, we will so appeal to you heart and conscience that we will win you in the process.*
- *God writes the Gospel, not in the Bible alone, but on trees flowers, clouds and stars.*
- *Forgiveness is not an occasional act; it is a permanent attitude.*
- *Nothing pains some people more than having to think.*

- *Even though I have never had an abrupt conversion experience, religion has been real to me and closely knitted to life. In fact the two cannot be separated; religion for me is life.*
- *Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend.*
- *The old law about "an eye for an eye" leaves everybody blind.*
- *In that dramatic scene on Calvary's hill, three men were crucified. We must not forget that all three were crucified for the same crime - the crime of extremism. Two were extremists for immorality, and thusly fell below their environment. The other, Jesus Christ, was an extremist for love, truth and goodness, and thereby rose above his environment.*
- *Yes, I see the Church as the body of Christ. But, oh! How we have blemished and scarred that body through social neglect and through fear of being nonconformists.*
- *We cannot be truly Christian people so long as we flaunt the central teachings of Jesus: brotherly love and the Golden Rule.*

In your Prayers please remember

- *Gerald Bush*, who passed into God's hands, December 2008
- *Nina L.*, recovering at home.
- *Robin*, recovering from brain surgery
- *Mary F.*, searching for new employment
- *Bishop Andy G.*, celebrating the birth of his new granddaughter
- *Fr. Robert J.*, completing chemotherapy

Please notify Fr. John or Sr. Joan by phone or e-mail if you would like someone placed on our Prayer list. Mass cards are available for the repose of a soul, or any other purpose as a "Spiritual Bouquet".

New Year's House Blessings!

Contact Fr. John for your annual house blessing, traditionally performed in and around Epiphany, the Feast of the Three Kings.