

THOUGHTS FROM YOUR PASTOR: Praying for the Vatican Summit – Get Involved!

As I mentioned last week, it has been a very difficult past seven months for all of us, given the revelations made regarding the inexcusable actions by some of our bishops and other clergy. Even after a sweeping effort in 2002 to institute child-protection measures throughout the American Church – which made a huge difference in preventing new cases – still many questions remain about some aspects of the leadership of certain U.S., bishops, how to hold bishops worldwide accountable, and how to even further create effective procedures.

Fortunately, Pope Francis has indicated a desire to discuss a coordinated world-wide effort to address the evil of abuse where it still exists. He has called together an international gathering of the heads of the Episcopal Conferences (basically, bishops from each nation) to be held at the Vatican later this month (Feb 21-24), in order to get a handle on the various aspects of the latest wave of this crisis. The gathering has much potential for action and healing within the Church. I thought that given the importance of this upcoming summit, and the wounds we have all experienced from the scandal, that it might be a good opportunity for our local Hardin County parishes to do some things in relation to the summit: to pray for the success of the summit, and also to reflect on our own questions, experiences, and needs. As a body of disciples, we all need healing and encouragement.

Accordingly, in today's bulletin, you will find two tools to use in the coming days: a) a **NOVENA** of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Prayer is so key to ongoing healing and reform. A Novena is a powerful form of prayer that is done over a 9-day period. Together as Hardin County Catholics, let's pray this Novena in the 9 days leading up to the beginning of the Vatican Summit: that is, from this Wednesday Feb 13 through Thursday Feb 21. Also, b) I have inserted in today's bulletin a **QUESTIONNAIRE** that I encourage you to fill out as a way to express what questions, experiences, and needs you may have as disciples struggling with the reality of this evil in our world. This questionnaire will be important for me to discern what possible forms of prayer and sharing might be helpful for us in our parishes in the near future.

Because the Catholic Church is such a beautiful and effective presence of Jesus Christ in our world, the evil one always tries to find ways to undermine its mission of the salvation of souls. But we must never let the evil one have his way. We must take action surrounded by the love of the Crucified Christ and not to give up as disciples. So, again, I urge all to make use of this Novena and this Questionnaire as ongoing steps in action and healing.

Fr. Ferguson is available to help you with any questions or concerns you may have; please contact him at hamilton.college@outlook.com or at 419-634-2626.

DID YOU KNOW? A Note From Your Parish Finance Council

[As indicated earlier, we will periodically be placing "blurbs" in the bulletin to make everyone aware of our practical, parish stewardship needs:]

The last fiscal year at Our Lady of Lourdes, we spent \$9,774 on church supplies. This includes the music missalettes, the wine and hosts needed for Mass, net cost of votive candles, occasional altar cloths, etc. We will also soon need to be spending over \$2,000 on new mikes due to the FCC changing frequencies. These costs are necessary and difficult to lower. However, we are still running short in covering our parish expenses. Please consider an increase in your Weekly Offertory, which provides the vast majority of our needed parish income. Thanks for your generosity and support of our parish family!

THOUGHTS FOR OUR PARISH CHILDREN by "Jackie", the Pastor's Cat



Hi boys and girls! My name is "Jackie", and as you know, I am Father Ferguson's cat. Thursday is Valentine's Day! That's right! I've never known how Saint Valentine (he lived many centuries ago) got connected with "falling in love" with someone. But his feast day (February 14) can remind us what true love really means. Love is not really a "feeling"; true love is really wanting what is truly best for someone else, even if it takes some effort. It means for boys to be nice to girls and to treat them with respect; and for girls to do the same thing for boys. I know that can be tough sometimes. As a girl, I often feel like making fun of the boy kitties when I go to Kitty School. But that's not nice.

I know I need to show them respect. And I often pray to Jesus to help me to do that, because that's what true love is: showing respect to others like Jesus did! Do you have a tough time being nice to the guys or girls you know? Why not pray to Jesus and ask for His help! Have a "purr"-fect week!

Novena of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for healing and surrender

**Suggested for use in preparation for the
Vatican Worldwide Summit of Bishops on the Abuse Crisis
in the nine days leading to the opening of the summit, that is,
from Wednesday 13 February through Thursday 21 February, 2019**

[Pray the following each day of the nine day period:]

Divine Jesus, You have said, "Ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you." Behold me kneeling at Your feet, filled with a lively faith and confidence in the promises dictated by Your Sacred Heart to Saint Margaret Mary. I come to ask this favor: *(Mention your request: e.g., fruit of the bishops' summit; healing of victims; personal healing from the scandal; continued growth of our parishes, etc.)*.

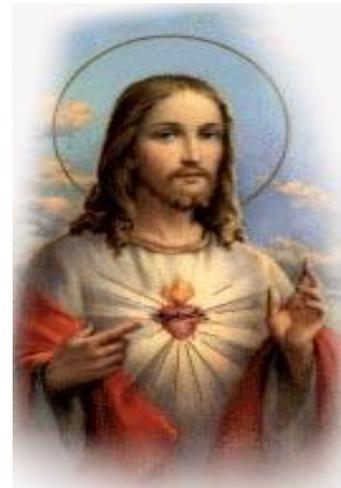
To whom can I turn if not to You, Whose Heart is the source of all graces and merits? Where should I seek if not in the treasure which contains all the riches of Your kindness and mercy? Where should I knock if not at the door through which God gives Himself to us and through which we go to God? I have recourse to You, Heart of Jesus. In You I find consolation when afflicted, protection when persecuted, strength when burdened with trials, and light in doubt and darkness.

Dear Jesus, I firmly believe that You can grant me the grace I implore, even though it should require a miracle. You have only to will it and my prayer will be granted. I admit that I am most unworthy of Your favors, but this is not a reason for me to be discouraged. You are the God of mercy, and You will not refuse a contrite heart. Cast upon me a look of mercy, I beg of You, and Your kind Heart will find in my miseries and weakness a reason for granting my prayer.

Sacred Heart, whatever may be Your decision with regard to my request, I will never stop adoring, loving, praising, and serving You. My Jesus, be pleased to accept this my act of perfect resignation to the decrees of Your adorable Heart, which I sincerely desire may be fulfilled in and by me and all Your creatures forever.

Grant me the grace for which I humbly implore You through the Immaculate Heart of Your most sorrowful Mother. You entrusted me to her as her child, and her prayers are all-powerful with You. Amen.

**Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Pray for Us!
Our Lady of Lourdes, Pray for Us!
St. Michael the Archangel, Pray for Us!
Sacred Heart of Jesus, Have Mercy on Us!**



Questionnaire

for use in our local prayerful preparation for the
Vatican Worldwide Summit of Bishops on the Abuse Crisis

(Please see the 'Pastor's Column' for background information)

Instructions:

1. Kindly DO NOT fill out the questionnaire during Mass time, out of respect for our Lord.
2. You may take this home to pray about your responses and to fill in.
3. It is completely optional whether you wish to sign your name, but doing so will help me to follow up on ideas you may have for future planning.
4. When finished, please place this sheet into the collection basket in the next week or two.
PLEASE REMEMBER TO FOLD IT INTO QUARTERS TO PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY.

Thanks for your participation as we together seek the Lord's help and healing! - Fr. Ferguson

- A. What might be two or three words which describe your reactions to the events of the last seven months?
- B. Have there been any negative experiences from others (neighbors, co-workers, schoolmates, etc.) that you or your family have faced as a result of the new attention given to the abuse crisis? If so, what are they?
- C. What are your hopes for the future regarding our national bishops and the work of the Vatican Summit?
- D. What do you personally and spiritually need as we together heal from what we've all been through?
- E. Would you find it helpful if we organized an informal "prayer and share" gathering at our parish for the purpose of ongoing healing? Do you have any other ideas for what we could do locally to discuss these issues and heal as we continue our discipleship?

Name (optional): _____