

HOLY REDEEMER



GRACE NOTES

May 2023

May Newsletter - 2023

Introduction...

It is a long-standing tradition in the Catholic Church that the month of May is devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Not just a *day* in May, but the entire month. But why is May Mary's month?

The custom of bestowing a "May Honor" on a society's most important women has existed for centuries. The Greeks dedicated the month of May to Artemis, the patron of chastity and helping women in childbirth. In Rome, May was dedicated to Flora, the goddess of flowering plants. It was no surprise then that in the Middle Ages the tradition of *Tricesimum*, or "Thirty-Day Devotion to Mary," began to flourish every May within the Catholic Church.

The ways in which Mary is currently honored in May are as varied as the people who honor her. Many parishes have a daily recitation of the Rosary during May, and some also erect a special May altar with a statue or picture of Mary as a reminder of Mary's month. And it's a long-standing tradition to crown the statue of Mary during May, a custom known as "May Crowning." Often, the crown is made of fresh blossoms representing Mary's beauty and virtue. It's also a reminder to the faithful to strive to imitate Mary's virtue in their own lives.



In his 1965 encyclical, Pope Paul VI urged the faithful to pray to Mary more than ever during the month of May. "For this is the month during which Christians, both in Church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts an especially fervent and loving homage of prayer and veneration." And in 1987, the Marian Year was declared by Pope John Paul II, when he stated that "The maid of Nazareth consented to God's plan; she journeyed on the pilgrimage of faith; she listened to God's Word and kept it in her heart; she remained steadfastly in close union with her Son, all the way to the foot of the Cross."



For most Catholics the decision to honor Mary in May is very simple. We honor Mary because she cares for all of us day-in-and-day-out without fail, interceding for us in even the tiniest matters.

And for that, she definitely deserves an entire month in her honor.

On the Shoulders of Giants – The Apostle Simon Peter

Isaac Newton said that all he had accomplished in life was due to “standing on the shoulders of the giants” who came before him. Each month we remember one of the giants upon whose shoulders the parishioners of Holy Redeemer are perched. For the next several months Grace Notes will focus on the Apostles and individually illuminate each of their life stories. This month it’s Simon Peter.

When Simon joined the apostles, he was thirty years of age and living in Bethsaida, near the fishing village of Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. His brother, the future Apostle Andrew, lived with him, and both Simon Peter and Andrew were partners with James and John, the sons of Zebedee, in a dried fish business.

Simon Peter’s name carries special significance in and of itself. Although there is some debate over when Simon Peter first encountered Jesus, at some point early in their relationship, Jesus gave Simon the name “*Cephas*,” meaning “*stone*” (John 1:42) which is translated as “*Petros*” in Greek, and “*Peter*” in English. One might imagine that Simon Peter likely wore his new name with pride, eager to live up to the favorable comparison of his convictions to the unyielding firmness of a “stone foundation.”



Peter was present for nearly every major miracle and event in Christ’s ministry. And, as part of the inner circle of Apostles (which included James and John), he had the honor of witnessing events that the other apostles were not privy to. This includes the first time that Jesus raised someone from death and returned them to life (Mark 5: 35-42), Jesus’ transfiguration on the mountain where he was joined by the spirits of Moses and Elijah (Matthew 17: 1-9), and joining Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane where he prayed with the Father before taking his final steps towards crucifixion (Matthew 26:36-45).

One key personality trait of Peter’s was his impulsiveness. Peter, alone among the other Apostles, followed Jesus out onto the Sea of Galilee when he saw him walking on water. Thankfully, Jesus showed mercy on him when his faith began to flag, saving him from drowning (Matthew 14: 24-32). Peter also acted rashly when the soldiers came to arrest Jesus following the final Passover meal, and lashed out with a sword, wounding the servant of the high priest before being told by Jesus to sheath his weapon (John 18: 10).



Perhaps the most controversial event of Peter’s life occurred during the night and early morning of Jesus’ arrest, when three times he denied knowing Jesus. When he failed this test and he left Jesus to face the mob alone, it forced Peter to recognize his own weaknesses. And somewhere inside of him the spark of resolution took hold: it would be the last time he allowed the world to shake his faith, and he would never deny Jesus again.

After Jesus' resurrection, during a walk with him on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, Peter affirmed his commitment to Jesus, and in turn Jesus directed that Peter – always a gifted writer and an eloquent speaker -- should take a leading role in spreading his teachings. At that time, Jesus also predicted that Peter would eventually follow in his footsteps and be martyred (John 21:18-19).



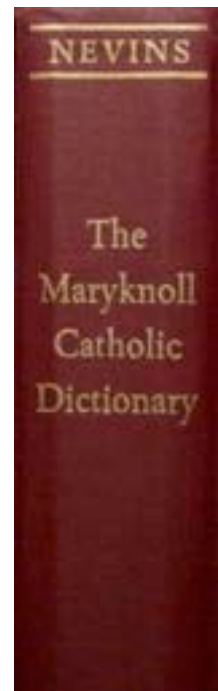
Peter lived to fulfill his commission. He taught the crowd at Pentecost and helped bring over 3,000 people to believe in Christ (Acts 2:14-41). He ushered in the era in which the gospel would be shared with Jew and Gentile alike (Acts 10: 9-48). He performed miracles in Jesus' name, including healing those who could not walk (Acts 3: 1-7; Acts 9: 32-34) and he raised a woman from the dead (Acts 9: 40-41). But perhaps even more than that, he worked tirelessly with the other Apostles to protect and guide the fledgling church during its most vulnerable early years.

After his martyrdom in Rome, Peter's legacy lived on. Today he is recognized as a remarkable leader who helped guide early Christianity out of the Holy Land and into the rest of the world. He is also recognized as the first Pope, establishing the line from which the authority of leadership derive.

Jeopardy for Catholics – Here's the way this works. We will give you the definitions of several important aspects of Catholicism as defined in the "The Mary Knoll Catholic Dictionary," and ask you to name them. As always, your answers must worded in the form of a question. This month we're focusing on baptism. Here goes.

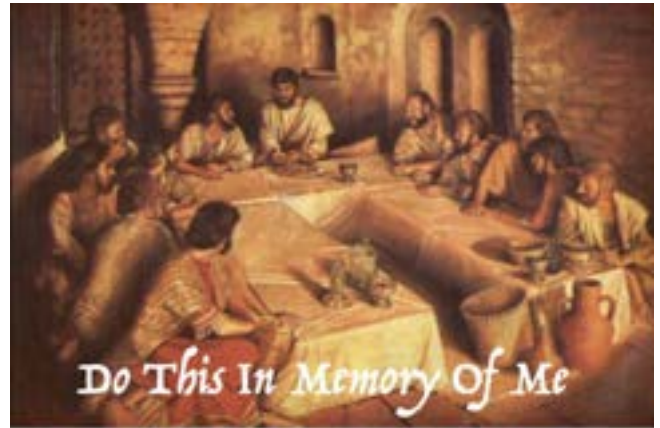
- Number One: It's a mixture of olive oil and balm, which is consecrated by a bishop on Holy Thursday and used in administering Baptism (as well as Confirmation and Holy Orders)
- Number Two: A male baptismal sponsor, who together with his partner make the profession of faith on behalf of the child to be baptized and thus assume responsibility for the spiritual education of the child. Also the name of an Academy Award winning movie starring Marlon Brando.
- Number 3: The basin – usually part of, or set on, a pedestal – that is used in the administration of baptism. Also a particular version of typeface such as Arial or Times New Roman.

The answers are provided on the final page of Grace Notes.



From the Pastor About the 2023 Catholic Appeal -- “Do This in Memory of Me”

Jesus Christ was present to his Apostles and disciples in his glorified body for forty days after the Resurrection. Still, even after Jesus ascended to the right hand of God the Father in Heaven, he promised to be with his disciples sacramentally until the end of time, by his presence in the Eucharist. In his 1st Letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul quoted Jesus’ instruction to the Apostles to break the bread and share the cup of the Eucharist in memory of him. He said every time we share the bread and wine of the Eucharist in remembrance of Him, he would become present to us in his Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.



The American Catholic Church is currently in the midst its three-year Eucharistic Revival. The U.S. Bishops initiated this undertaking to help revitalize and strengthen our Catholic belief in Jesus’ faithfulness to his promise to be with us always in the Eucharist. As Catholics, we believe Jesus Christ’s real presence comes about in four different ways during every Mass. Most importantly, Christ is present in the bread and wine we share at Communion but also in the person of the priest celebrating the Mass, the scripture passages read during the celebration, and the faithful assembled to share the Eucharist and then go forth from church to be the Eucharist for others. We especially need to go into the world to be the presence of Christ for the materially and spiritually poor.



Registered parishioners should have recently received a mailing announcing the 82nd Catholic Appeal of the Diocese of Fall River, which begins on May 1 and runs through June 30, 2023. Appropriately the theme for the 2023 Appeal is Jesus’ instruction to the Apostles taken from 1st Corinthians 11:25 “Do this in memory of me.” It ties together our obligation to receive the Eucharist at Mass and then to go into the community as good stewards who share our gifts of time, talent, and treasure.

In 2022, Holy Redeemer parishioners contributed \$51,360 to the Catholic Appeal. I want to thank them and challenge all parishioners to increase our 2023 donation by 5% or \$2,600 for a total of \$54,000. Wouldn’t it be a testament to our faith in Jesus’ presence in the Eucharist and our desire to be Christ’s presence in the world if every Holy Redeemer parishioner generously contributed to the Catholic Appeal?

The agencies that the Catholic Appeal helps fund are the largest non-governmental emergency assistance providers for the Southcoast, Cape, and Islands. They provide shelters for people experiencing homelessness, like St. Joseph's House in Hyannis, the television mass for shut-ins, refugee resettlement support, and faith formation resources for our children and youth. When your Catholic Appeal letter comes, read over the letter and brochure. They give more details about the activities of the offices and agencies receiving support from the Catholic Appeal.



The Appeal also helps our diocesan social service agencies respond quickly to emerging needs in our community. A severe consequence of the COVID Pandemic has been an increased need for mental health support services. Funds from the Catholic Appeal recently supported Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fall River to establish a Mental Health Ministry. This national model program strives to provide a safe, supportive space for individuals experiencing mental health challenges in a faith-based setting.

When you read over your Catholic Appeal Letter, prayerfully consider your gift. The works of the Appeal are crucial because they are done in the name of Jesus and are Christ's Eucharistic presence made real in our world.

Like you, I receive dozens of requests from charitable organizations every week, and much as I might like to, I can't contribute to all of them. Still, I plan to donate to the Catholic Appeal because I truly believe it helps make Jesus' love and compassion alive here in our diocese.

Each year I budget 10% of my income for charitable gifts. I donate 5% to Holy Redeemer Parish, 2½% to other charities, and 2½% or \$2,000 to the Catholic Appeal this year. Could you do something similar? Could you donate not just the same contribution you have been giving for years but one that is a generous portion of your income? Pray about it. Together, we can help make the 2023 Catholic Appeal successful and one that is Jesus' Eucharistic presence in our world.

Pastoral Plan for 2023 through 2026

Holy Redeemer's Parish Council – together with Father Sullivan – recently finalized the three-year Pastoral Plan for 2023 to 2026. The Plan focuses on the following key domains: 1) Sacraments and Worship; 2) Education and Formation; 3) Governance and Finance; 4) Social Services and Outreach; and 5) Vocations and Evangelization.



Within each domain, specific objectives have been identified that the parish will strive to implement within the next three years. The initial objectives that the Parish Council and Father Sullivan plan to address during 2023 are noted below:

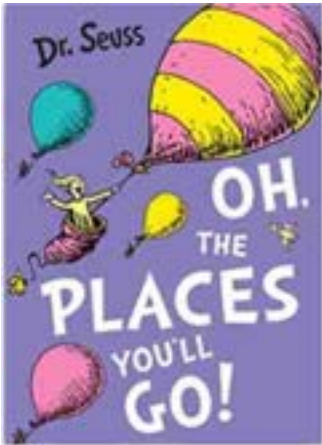
- Establish an effective Faith Formation Program by (a) Establishing a year-round Liturgy of the Word for children; (b) Ensuring greater participation of children and parents by conducting Faith Formation classes during Mass; (c) Establishing an Evangelization Program for adults; and (d) Establishing a program for small faith sharing groups, [e.g., a Gospel Reflection Group].
- Ensure that the liturgical experience at Holy Redeemer is inspirational by (a) Ensuring that all staff participating in the Mass and other worship activities are properly trained in the performance of their activities; and (b) Taking creative approaches to incorporate the uniqueness of each of the Church's seasons into the liturgical experience.
- Broaden assessment of the parish liturgical experience by placing a brief questionnaire (requiring 2-3 minutes to complete) in each pew during the summer months, which will be returned following the Mass in the back of the church.
- Provide support for devotional activities by (a) Maintaining all current activities such as the Morning Rosary, the October Living Rosary, and the Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help; and (b) Regularly assessing additional devotional activities, including the expansion or modification of current activities possibly facilitated by a Liturgy Ministry.
- Explore developing an "Adopt a Member of a Religious Training Community" Program wherein the parish would develop a relationship with an individual training to become a priest, brother, religious sister, or deacon, preferably someone with ties to Cape Cod. The Program would provide monetary support [through Holy Redeemer's diocesan collection for ecclesiastical students] and also provide a platform for them to visit the parish from time to time and share their experiences with parishioners, including children participating in the Faith Formation Program.

The entire three-year Pastoral Plan is available for viewing on the parish's website (www.holyredeemerchatham.org).

Getting to Know the Congregation – Barbara Wells

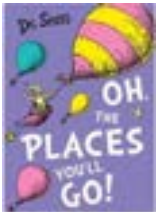
There are a couple of ways to think about Barbara Wells' life. On the one hand, there's "The Picture of Dorian Gray" approach. Not that Barbara has anything in common with Oscar Wilde's main character, who vainly traded his soul to obtain eternal youth. But it difficult to believe that Barbara's twinkling eyes, infectious smile, strong voice, and engaging anecdotes belong to a woman on the brink of turning 95. That said, one would probably need to be 95 to pack in all of the adventures and accomplishments that Barbara has experienced during her life.





On the other hand, we think there's a more suitable approach to looking at Barbara's life. Namely, the Dr. Seuss-inspired "Oh, the places you'll go! And the things you'll do!" method. And that's the approach we're planning to take.

Here we go.



"You're off to the Great Places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting! So get on your way!" -- Dr. Seuss

We're guessing that Barbara's "Today is your day!" day most likely occurred in 1947 on a trip to Chatham where she met Doug, her husband to be. And there seems little question that her "You're off to Great Places!" day can be pinpointed to their wedding in 1950, and Doug's decision to take a job with Nestle, the Swiss-based chocolate giant. Because it wasn't long after joining Nestle that Doug was chosen to attend a select business administration school in Switzerland, co-founded by Nestle, Harvard, and the University of Lausanne.





Which meant that the Barbara, Doug and their two children Fran and Doug Jr. were bound for Europe. (Two additional children – Chris and Matt – would soon follow.) “Doug went ahead and I sailed across the Atlantic with the kids in the dead of winter on the Queen Mary. The English port of Southampton was ice-bound when we arrived and the kids and I had to scramble several stories backwards down rope ladders to a waiting dinghy that ferried us to shore. I thought we’d freeze to death.”

Doug’s career ascent within Nestle can only be described as meteoric, resulting in executive positions around the globe, including Chicago and New Zealand. New Zealand provided fond memories -- “We built a boat in New Zealand which we christened the ‘Chaperone,’ and we sailed around the entire country.” – and scary ones as well – “Matt contracted meningitis and was treated in a very primitive hospital, but he got good care and survived.”



Then came South Africa.



“You will come to a place where the streets are not marked. Some windows are lighted. but mostly they're darked. A place you could sprain both your elbow and chin! Do you dare to stay out? Do you dare to go in? How much can you lose? How much can you win?” -- Dr. Seuss

Apartheid was still the law of the land in South Africa when Barbara, Doug and their children were posted there. “South Africa was very hard. Soweto (the black ghetto, which was the epicenter for overthrowing white rule) was just terrible. Nothing by handmade shacks. The whites-only school Matt attended was extremely harsh. No one ever spoke up to the teachers, except for Matt. And worse, kids were taught a ‘Youth Preparedness’ program that was intended to make sure they were ready for the coming revolution.”



“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose.” -- Dr. Seuss

Their lives as expatriates ended in 1980 when Doug retired from Nestle and he and Barbara became full-time residents of Chatham. They continued their love affair with sailing. “We joined the Stage Harbor Yacht Club. We did a lot of racing and I crewed for Doug.” And bit by bit many of the interests that had been mostly dormant during Barbara’s time overseas began to awaken. In 1984 she launched “The Chatham Book Group,” which is still going. “We thought we should read the book ‘1984’ in 1984. Not our most pleasant reading experience.”



She worked at “The Yellow Umbrella Bookstore” on Main Street (“I was Erica’s first employee”) and at the Rocking Unicorn Nursery School. She volunteered in various schools, working in the library and tutoring students. And in the spirit of an Andy Hardy movie, she even put on “mini-operas” in local schools, inspiring at least one student – Kimberly Howard – to pursue a professional career in opera.

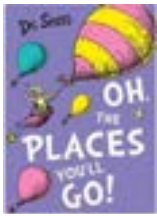


“There are points to be scored. There are games to be won. And the magical things you can do with that ball will make you the winning-est winner of all.” – Dr. Suess

Barbara’s love affair with music actually began long before her husband’s retirement and their move back to Chatham. She sang in the Glee Club during her days at Vassar College, which was conducted by the renowned John Peirce. She served as the “Fruit Coordinator” for the Chatham Chorale. “I routinely ordered over 100 crates of oranges and grapefruits, which we sold in Chatham to raise money for the Chorale.” Barbara was a member of the Chorale for over 40 years – singing in over 100 concerts -- until the COVID pandemic put a hold on their activities in 2021. And she was a charter member of Holy Redeemer’s Choir, when it was established by Father Buckley in 1988. She remained a member for 34 years, until she finally stepped down in 2022.

Barbara was also a longtime supporter of the Monomoy Theater, serving as a Friends Board Member and singing in their productions of “The Music Man” and “The Sound of Music.” And in an amazing bit of irony, for the company’s production of “The Sound of Music,” Barbara – playing the role of a nun – sang to the von Trapp children, which included a then very young member of Holy Redeemer’s current choir, Amanda Constant.





"I'm sorry to say so but, unfortunately, it's true, that Bang-ups and Hang-ups can happen to you." -- Dr. Seuss

As character on a popular television show recently put it, "Nobody gets through life unscathed." And that's certainly true for Barbara. She's survived three bouts of breast cancer, and sadly, after 58 years of marriage, Barbara lost her husband Doug to a long illness in 2009. But she remains undaunted, head up and shoulders back, an inspiration to everyone who knows her.



As the narrator of "Oh, The Places You'll Go!" puts it, "*Kid, you'll move mountains!*" And Barbara certainly has.

...Conclusion

*"Time it was and what a time it was, it was
A time of innocence
A time of confidences
Long ago, it must be
I have a photograph."
--"Bookends Theme," by Simon and Garfunkel*

If you are of a certain age there is a picture that is burned in your memory. Actually it's the cover of the ubiquitous soundtrack album from the 1970 music festival "Woodstock," which sold over three million copies. The cover shows a young girl standing on a crowded hillside embracing her boyfriend. Behind a pair of extra-large sunglasses, clad in a multicolored garment and partly covered by a pink-trimmed blanket, she seemed to embody the flower-child spirit.





The girl in the picture -- Bobbi Kelly – passed away a couple of weeks ago at the age of 73. She married her boyfriend in the picture – Nick Ercoline – soon after the concert, and they remained married until her death. When the New York Times interviewed Nick for his wife’s obituary, he recalled a very touching story about their presence at Woodstock, and the consequence of Bobbi’s appearance on the album cover.

At the time of the concert Bobbi worked as a bank clerk and Nick was putting himself through college working as a bartender and a construction laborer. They were both observant Roman Catholics living in Middletown, a small city near the festival site in upstate New York.

They had thought about going to the Woodstock, but the \$18 tickets struck them as too pricey. News reports for Friday’s opening day were filled with accounts of colossal traffic jams and hordes of young people, and so the next morning Bobbi and Nick climbed into a friend’s station wagon and headed off to see what all the fuss was about.

They had to ditch the car miles from the festival and continued down back roads on foot. Along the way they found the now iconic pink blanket -- discarded by the side of the road – and took it to have something to sit on while they listened to the music. It was late by the time they finally made to the concert site, and exhausted they decided to stay the night.

Shortly after dawn on Sunday morning a freelance photographer – Burk Uzzle – spotted the couple standing on the side of the hill, holding onto each other, with the pink blanket wrapped around their shoulders. Before heading for Woodstock his boss had told him to study the detailed compositions of the Quattrocento painters of Renaissance Italy, and to Burk the sight of Bobbi and Nick and the blanket seemed to fit the bill.

The day the “Woodstock” soundtrack came out, a friend of Bobbi and Nick’s bought the album, and invited them over to listen to the music. When Bobbi arrived her first thought was to look at the back of the album to see what songs were included. When she turned the album over the color drained from her face. “It’s me.” “Wow, that’s cool,” her friend gushed. “You don’t understand,” Bobbi replied. “When my mother sees the picture she’ll know I didn’t go to mass.”

Answers to Jeopardy for Catholics

Answer to Number One: What is oil of chrisem?



Answer to Number Two: What is a godfather?



Answer to Number Three: What is a baptismal font?

