

FROM THE PASTOR
APRIL 30, 2023
THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY - THE MONTH OF OUR LADY

The Month of May: As everyone is well aware the month of May is the month of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We may ask ourselves why is such the case? After all, each of the months of the year brings around her glorious feasts. Why is August not the month of Our Lady when we celebrate the Assumption? Why is December not the month of Our Lady when we celebrate her Immaculate Conception? What is it about May which makes it the month of Our Lady? Quite, simply it is because the month of May is the most beautiful month both in the natural and supernatural order. And Our Lady is the most beautiful of all the Good God's creation.

May is the most beautiful month in the natural order. It is in May that the season of spring is first perceived. Although spring begins at the vernal equinox toward the end of March, it is not until May that we see the days grow long, brighter and warmer. The earth breaks forth in full life and the birds sing for joy. And although even May sometimes may be quite harsh, nonetheless, we know that soon the warm weather will be with us. It is therefore the month of hope and promise.

May is also the most beautiful month in the supernatural order. Almost always the whole month of May is in the Easter season when the joy-filled alleluia rings through our churches. This year 2023 that is the case. All of May is in the Easter season. The feast of the Ascension is always in May (except one or twice every forty years or so) and often, the Feast of Pentecost is in May. May also brings with it the celebration of many of the saints. Three of the apostles have their feastdays in May: St. Philip, St. James and St. John. The Holy Archangel St. Michael's apparition on Monte Gargano is celebrated in May. And so dear to us here at St. Paul's, the feast of St. Philip Neri (May 26th) is celebrated in May. His holy image and relic adorn our Daily Mass Chapel. On May 24th we celebrate the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Help of Christians. It is that statue of Our Lady which we see in the front of the Church.

During the month of May we should make every effort to offer a gift to Our Lady each day. Not the kind of gift one buys at the store. We should offer a spiritual gift. One day we could offer her the Rosary well said, another day a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, another day a visit to an elderly or lonely person, etc. You see there are as many gifts as there are days in the month.

St. Gabriel Possenti was a member of the Passionist order (Many may know the Passionists from their monastery in Jamaica) who died at the age of 24 in 1862. Here is his advice to us: *Love Mary! She does not look to see what kind of person you have been. She simply comes to a heart that wants to love her. She comes quickly and opens her merciful heart to you, embraces you and consoles and serves you.*

Mother's Day: As we know, in two weeks it will be Mother's Day. May God bless and reward all the mothers in our parish. A mother gives of herself completely to her family and very

often in unnoticed and unseen ways. The only one of the Ten Commandments which has a blessing attached to it is the Fourth Commandment – Honor thy father and thy mother.

A mother is a person who receives a child into her own flesh, providing for him the stuff of his own body. And yet, the Christian mother is called to more: to receive the child in Christ's name.

So many of the saints of the Church were mothers who exemplified the beatitudes. St. Elizabeth of Portugal was a peace maker. She rode out between the warring armies of her husband and son and restored peace. St. Matilda meekly removed herself from her own home rather than stir up her son's anger. St. Margaret Clitherow, on the eve of her brutal martyrdom, sent her shoes to her daughter with the clear message, follow my path. St. Monica relentlessly prayed her son St. Augustine into the Church. Augustine wrote in his *Confessions*, "*She wept more for me than mothers weep over their children's dead bodies.*" May these saints who were mothers ever intercede for our dear mothers!

Please be sure to enroll your mothers (living or deceased) in the Mother's Day Novena of Masses

SAVE THE DATE

On Sunday June 4th St. Paul the Apostle Parish will celebrate the 15th Anniversary of Deacon Raymond P. D'Alessio' ordination to the Holy Diaconate. The actual date of Deacon Ray' ordination was May 18, 2008, We will observe it at the 10.30 Mass on Sunday June 4th followed by a reception in the Lower Hall. Deacon Ray has been such a humble servant of the Lord in our midst and has done so much for all of us to help us come closer to God and His Blessed Mother. We will give thanks for his ministry at St. Paul. Everyone is cordially invited to attend the Mass and reception.

Please remember that our Annual Golf Outing will be Monday June 5th. I am most grateful for the Committee of Don Cavanaugh, Tom Principe, Paula Maturo, and Anne Maione for all of their dedicated service. Please make every effort to attend and support this endeavor. It is the principal fund raiser for the parish. Our honorees this year are Mr. and Mrs. Christopher and Joie Hein and their family. They have been long time and very dedicated parishioners of St. Paul.

We remind you that our little ones will be receiving First Holy Communion on Saturday, May 6th. They will participate in the May Crowning on Sunday May 14th after the 10.30AM Mass. On that day they will be enrolled in the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

Please see elsewhere in the Bulletin information about our Annual Communion Breakfast sponsored by the Marian Guild and the Knights of Columbus. The Guild members and the Knights and squires will attend the 10.30 Mass on Sunday May 21st and the Breakfast will immediately follow the Mass. Our guest celebrant for the Mass and speaker at the Communion Breakfast is Father Christopher Heller who was ordained a priest in June of 2022. Father Heller's family have been long time parishioners here at St. Paul and he is presently serving as parochial vicar at St. Dominic's, Oyster Bay.

In Jesus and Mary,
Monsignor James F. Pereda