

I am feeling a bit like the “Travelin’ Man.” (I’m sure those my age and older remember that Ricky Nelson song.) Rome for conclusion of Year for Priests, Ocean Shores for Priest Days, and Ashland for Shakespeare. My big focus in the next twelve months will be the preparations for our St. Mary of the Valley delegation to World Youth Day (Madrid, August 12-23, 2011). I am excited that we have such a good number of enthusiastic candidates from our parish.



It is a big investment to send a young person to World Youth Day, but I am convinced it is one of the best investments that a family can make. In our World Youth Day meetings we have been talking about working on fund raising so the experience can be open to as many young people as possible. One of our major fundraising projects for this summer will be a Garage Sale on August 6. Please read the flier in our bulletin and do whatever you can to support this project.

The delegation will represent our entire parish. On our way to Madrid we will spend a few days in Italy. There we will pray at the sacred sites, such as the tombs of Saints Peter and Paul in Rome and the tombs of St. Francis and St. Claire in Assisi. I want every parishioner to feel a part of this pilgrimage as we bring your intentions with us.

On the first Sunday of each month between now and next April (the month when the final payment is due), we will have a World Youth Day basket in the sanctuary. I invite you to consider a donation of one dollar (or more) to support our parish youth in this pilgrimage.

I have a personal project during the month of July that I would like to tie in with World Youth Day. As I mentioned in last Sunday’s bulletin, I will be making a Shrine to Our Lady in front of the rectory. I have already received donations in memory of my brother-in-law, Alex, and a deceased parishioner here at St. Mary of the Valley. These donations should cover most, if not all of the expenses, of the shrine. I would also like to include your deceased loved ones. The shrine will have a kind of “time capsule” that will contain the names of any faithful departed you wish to commend to Our Lady’s intercession. She has a special role in receiving us at the moment of death. As we say, “Pray for us, sinners, now and at the hour of our death.” We want the Blessed Mother to embrace our loved ones and take them before God’s mercy.

At the entrances of the church, you will find envelopes where you can list the names of departed loved ones. There are six spaces on the envelope. If you are like me, you will want to list deceased parents and grandparents. If you have the good fortune of your grandparents and parents still being with you, please consider listing other departed loved ones. As the envelope indicates you may list other names and place them inside the envelopes. There is no offering required, but all donations exceeding the cost of the shrine will go to support St. Mary of the Valley Delegation to World Youth Day. The Shrine will be dedicated on July 25.

Before placing the envelopes in the “time capsule” I hope to transcribe all the names to a list that we can take on World Youth Day pilgrimage. I am convinced that one of the most important things we can do is to pray for our departed loved ones. Not only do they need our prayers, but we also need to pray for them. A number of years ago, I read about “Healing the Family Tree.” While some have carried this ministry too far, I believe that the basic idea is sound. Particularly good are the books and tapes of Fr. John Hampsch, CMF. One of the most effective ways of bringing healing to one’s family tree is by praying and especially offering Mass for departed loves, beginning with one’s most immediate family: parents, grandparents, siblings, children, spouse, etc. I invite you to join me during the month of July in this project of remembrance and healing.

Speaking of praying and healing, Fr. Bill Peterson, C.Ss.R., will be with us this coming Friday evening devotions (including Mass, confessions and Eucharist Adoration) and for weekend Masses and confessions. I am grateful for his help that enables me to attend the Shakespeare Festival in Ashland. I will be with Fr. Jim Coleman who, you might remember, visited us the last weekend of May.

It is not too late for any young man, aged 13-18, who wishes to attend Quo Vadis Days. It opens with dinner this Sunday at 5 p.m. and concludes with lunch on Wednesday, June 30. Please see me for more information or go to <http://www.qvdays.org/>

Finally, a couple of important matters regarding Stewardship of financial resources: You will notice the Annual Catholic Appeal thermometer that indicates that pledges have reached and exceeded the parish goal. Any amount over the goal is returned to the parish in the form of a rebate and will be used for parish improvements. As you might remember, our Building Commission has identified many areas of need in our parish hall and church. In the bulletin you will see the list of all St. Mary of the Valley parishioners who made a pledge to the Appeal. Apart from the Annual Catholic Appeal is your support of the parish in the Sunday collection. As I round out a year as your pastor, I am grateful for all your support. June 30 marks the end of the current fiscal year. On July 1 we begin the new 2010-2011 fiscal year. I have asked Austin

Mitchell and Alex Tapia to give presentations at Mass this weekend. At the entrances of the church you will find a copy of the budget for the new fiscal year (one side is in English and the other in Spanish). I am grateful to the Finance Council and Parish Council for their work in developing this budget. I appreciate your support that enables us to realize our parish mission. May God bless you all!

