



*World Youth Day 2011 information meeting, May 26* Standing: Ryan, Ruby, Grace, Michelle, Clayton, Marnie, Abby, Jessica, Catherine, Vernon, Oscar, Christian, Mary Grace, Martha, Christopher. Seated: Meghan, Tricia, Fr. Bloom, Sr. Barbara (picture by Roberta Tansey)

We had a wonderful **World Youth Day** meeting on Wednesday evening. Above is a picture of those who attended. Vernon Wells, who guides the youth group at Holy Family Parish, gave a rousing presentation. He not only explained the itinerary (which includes Rome and Assisi, as well as the week in Madrid for the WYD activities), but also the spiritual dimension of this pilgrimage. Sr. Barbara told about her experience at the 1993 World Youth Day in Denver, and we watched a video about the 2008 World Youth Day in Australia.

A good group of youth and adults from St. Mary of the Valley have expressed a strong interest in attending the World Youth Day in August of 2011. **Our next WYD meeting will be on June 17** at 7 p.m. (room 7) to formulate a plan for fundraising. Some of the leaders of the Holy Family youth group will be with us again to help get organized and to answer any questions. Participants must be at least fourteen years old by August 2011.

Speaking of young people, next weekend I will be offering a **blessing for graduates** at the conclusion of each Mass. Students who are graduating (for example, from middle and high school or college) may come forward for this blessing.

At the other end of life's spectrum, the Catholic Business Guild is sponsoring a "**Senior Options Workshop & BBQ**" on June 19 (10 a.m. to noon), at St. Thomas More Parish in Lynnwood. For more information, please see the flier on our bulletin boards.

On June 6, I will be going to Rome for the conclusion of the **Year for Priests**. I thank all those who have participated in this prayer. I will be taking a list of priests for whom I will be praying by name. **If you wish to add the name of priest to that list, please print his name in one of the notebooks available in the back of the church, this weekend and the next.** Please indicate whether the priest is living or deceased. Since priesthood has an indelible character, I will of course be praying in a special way for our former pastor, Michael O'Brien.

And talking about prayer, I encourage you to attend Mass this Monday morning, May 31. Besides being Memorial Day, this will be the **concluding Mass for our month of prayer regarding immigration**. Very appropriately, May 31 is the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth. Fr. Jim Coleman – a St. James Society priest from the Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon – will be with us.

I ask special prayers this week for our parish staff. This Thursday we will have our **annual retreat day**. Leigh Stringfellow from the Archdiocese of Seattle will guide the retreat. On Wednesday afternoon and evening, staff and parish members will attend the **Archdiocesan Stewardship Formation**.

Finally, I would like to give a huge thank-you to all who made their pledge to the Annual Catholic Appeal. As of this week 236 households have pledged a total of \$43,365. **WE HAVE MET OUR GOAL – ALL DONATIONS BEYOND THE GOAL WILL GO TO PARISH IMPROVEMENT!!** If you have not yet pledged, please know that your pledge will directly benefit our parish by enabling us, for example, to repair the restrooms in our parish hall. I thank you for your support.