

Inside This Issue...

- 2 The Challenge of Discipleship
- 3 "Here I Am, Lord." But Are You Really There? Are You Responding to God's Call?
- 4 Two Festivals – Opportunities for Fellowship and Fun – Slated in October
- 6 The Principles of Catholic Social Teaching
- 7 Lay Association of the Faithful
The Family Rosary Movement of Reparation to the Immaculate Heart



New Head Usher Ready to Greet Parish Family with Aloha

Often among the first faces you see when you arrive for Mass, our ushers are responsible for providing a warm welcome that endures long after visitors have left. By quietly guiding parishioners to their seats, answering questions, and being the eyes and ears of clergy during Mass, these individuals help make the social side of Mass more hospitable.

"Ushers take on a myriad of things – we're hospitality, we're the first person they see when they come into church, and we like to be the last when they leave," says newly appointed Head Usher John Wheeler. "It's very important that we greet them with *aloha* here and treat them as family."

While it's easy to think of an usher's job as merely to help parishioners find seats, John says the usher's role is to assure that those in those seats have a comfortable and safe environment that lets them concentrate only on the Lord.

"I'm a look-ahead kind of guy," John explains. "The ushers I have at each Mass are competent. Any issues that arise, we should be able to handle that without interrupting the Mass."

That includes small things like answering parishioner questions or directing them to the proper ministry, and being ready for bigger things like a medical emergency. While we're blessed to have the Mililani-Waipio Fire Station across the street and Health Ministry (nurses in the pews) if an emergency should arise, John says the ministry is working hard to make sure ushers are trained in CPR.



continued on back cover

The Challenge of Discipleship

God calls us to give Him everything – our whole heart, our whole soul, and our whole mind. This is the challenge of discipleship – a lifelong process of more fully placing our lives under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

The reason that God can ask such complete service from us is that He made us. Everything we have belongs to Him! This includes our intelligence, our physical ability, our artistic talent, our family, our finances, our government – anything we may typically think of as “ours.”

It takes courage to recognize that we are not the masters of our possessions and ourselves. Furthermore, as Christians, we believe that because everything we have is a gift from God, we are called to give Him thanks. We express our thanks by using our gifts to further His kingdom on earth. This is the basis for our understanding of stewardship.

We refer to “time,” “talent,” and “treasure” in order to differentiate between the various parts of our life that belong to God. “Time” is the duration of life that God has given us. “Talent” includes the special gifts or strengths God has nurtured in us. “Treasure” is what we have earned through our time and talent.

Even though we identify these three aspects of stewardship, they are still part of the same Gospel-based concept. And even when we focus separately on these

parts, it should not signal that one is more important than the other. Instead, focusing on each aspect one at a time helps us to better concentrate on that area in our lives.

Stewardship is, after all, an attitude. If our goal is to become better stewards, we must have a reason in our minds to do so. Here are the basics of a stewardship attitude:

“God made everything!”

A wholehearted trust that God made all things is essential to understanding stewardship. Recognizing God as the Creator is one of the most basic, profound beliefs of Christianity.

“I am truly blessed!”

It takes humility in order to truly acknowledge God’s goodness. Every great triumph and every little pleasure is a blessing from above, and every strong character trait we possess is a gift from God.

“I believe I am to use God’s gifts for His glory!”

What better way to thank God for His goodness than by using our personal gifts to glorify Him? We are not the owners of our time, talent or treasure. But we are caretakers given the responsibility of spreading God’s kingdom on earth.



A Letter From Our Pastor

“Here I Am, Lord.” But Are You Really There? Are You Responding to God’s Call?

Dear Parishioners,

Throughout the Bible we hear people say, “Here I am, Lord,” or something similar. Normally, it is a response to a communication, a call, from God. In the Old Testament Book of Exodus, for example, it states, “God called out to him from the bush: ‘Moses! Moses!’ He answered, ‘Here I am’” (Exodus 3:4). We often speak in the Church about the fact that we have each received a calling from God. We also regularly say that one way to respond to that call is to live a life of stewardship.

Of course, the truth is that many do not hear God’s call because they are either not listening or they do not want to hear it. Of course, that is not how we should feel. I could write about my own call, but right now, I would rather address your call.

This is a time of year when there are calls from those in need all around us. Some of those calling are ministries right here in our parish. Before I address our response, it is important to emphasize that we need to hear the call. To hear something, we have to be listening.

The second issue is our response to the call. Do we indeed say, “Here I am”? Or, do we choose to say and do nothing? Stewardship is a call to action, a call to do something to share with and to help others. In the Old Testament passage cited above,

Moses responds, “Who am I?” (Exodus 3:11) – meaning he feels unworthy and unable to fulfill this call from the Lord. God’s answer is everything, as He says to Moses simply, “I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12). Thus, we receive the call; we are to respond to God making it clear that we are ready. We may quite likely feel (as Moses did) that we are unprepared for what God may be asking us to do, but His response to Moses was the same as His response to us – “I will be with you.”

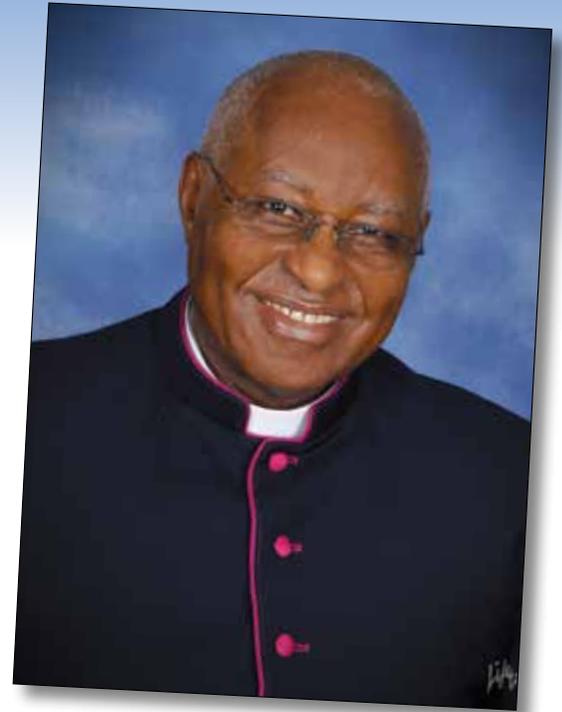
That is enough to empower us and strengthen us to try to serve God and fulfill His desires for us. Of course, there is one other call to which we need to respond. It is, as Christ said many times, “Come follow Me.”

As we enter this part of our personal year, this part of our calendar year, and this part of our Church year, may we be ready to listen, to respond, and then to do – full with the knowledge that the Lord is with us always!

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Msgr. John S. Mbinda
Pastor



.....

*It is,
as Christ
said many
times,
“Come
follow
Me.”*

.....

Two Festivals – Opportunities for Fellowship

October is going to be a month chock full of fun here at St. John Apostle & Evangelist, with the Harvest Festival set for Oct. 14, and the new event – Oktoberfest – set for Oct. 28.

The Harvest Festival will run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the church grounds. It will raise funds for our Religious Education Department.

“We’ll be selling SCRIPT for all the games and food at the Harvest Festival,” says Julie Quiroz-Zamora, Religious Education Director.

Although the Harvest Festival has not always been an annual event, last year’s festival had a new feature that is being repeated this year.

“Last year, we took it a step further and opened the festival to the public,” Julie says. “We invited people to come in with food trucks, arts & crafts, etc. This year we are adding more children’s games, a pumpkin patch, pumpkin carving and a karaoke contest.”

The Harvest Festival promises to provide lots of good times, fellowship and wonderful food.

“We’ll have food from different ethnicities, a truck with shave ice and ice cream, and things like candy and kettle corn. There will be a children’s fish pond, face painting, henna art, and also bouncers for kids.”

The Harvest Festival is an opportunity not only for the youngsters, but also for the adults to share in the good works of our parish ministries.

“We invite all the ministries to participate,” Julie says. “Our Book Club will have a table to display the books they’ve read and invite the public to view. We’ll also honor our Lady of Fatima in her 100 year anniversary with a special rosary at 12 noon. It’s a fun day for everyone, especially the children!”

A special feature at the festival will be a harvest display that everyone can use for a photo background.



ellowship and Fun – Slated in October

Naturally, there is a need for volunteers to help with set-up and security, as well as breaking everything down afterward.

“Come out and support us, and take part as a group if you have a ministry, or arts and crafts, or if you’d like to bring your wares to sell,” Julie says. “We have a lot of talented parishioners. Anything you can create, you can display.”

Plans are under way for the inaugural Oktoberfest set for 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Oct. 28. And yes, there will be emcees in lederhosen!

“We really felt there was a need to have fun for adults and families,” Julie says.

Discussion circled the idea and the plan for Oktoberfest was set. Parishioners with German ancestry have agreed to help with the food. There will be German music, and a biergarten (beer garden) will be set up on the patio where guests can purchase beer or wine.

All proceeds from the Oktoberfest will go to the youth. Ministry Volunteers are needed for Oktoberfest, as well.

Parishioners wishing to volunteer for Harvest Festival or Oktoberfest may call the Religious Education Department at 808-623-3332, ext. 204 or 206. The parish website at www.stjohnmililani.org will also have vendor sign-up sheets available, as well as information about volunteering.



The Principles of Catholic Social Teaching

What makes being Catholic, well, “Catholic”? Things like the Mass, the Rosary and the Seven Sacraments come to mind. But there is also an element of Church teaching that’s often overlooked and sometimes misunderstood – Catholic Social Teaching.

Catholic Social Teaching guides Catholics on how to apply the faith to all aspects of life, and lays the framework for the Church’s teachings on the dignity and sacredness of human life.

Catholic Social Teaching can be explained with 10 key points. These 10 principles demonstrate the depth of the Church’s teaching on social justice, and they call Catholics to take an active role in shaping the world in which we live. Catholic Social Teaching, when taken to heart, can become the catalyst that causes positive change in a world that desperately needs it. Consider these principles and strive to apply them in your own life.

Human Dignity

Human dignity is the fundamental principle within the Church’s teaching on social justice. A firm understanding of this principle is required so that the rest of Catholic Social Teaching can be viewed from the appropriate perspective. God created us in His image and likeness, so we all are worthy of respect.

Respect for Human Life

Whether unborn or seconds away from death, no life deserves to be

prematurely ended. The Church sees this principle as crucial to the health of any society.

Association

Association holds that social relationships must be developed so that all people may reach their fullest potential. The Church teaches that the family is the basic unit upon which all other elements of society rest. We must uphold the sacredness of the family, and foster the growth of other societal organizations that preserve the well-being of all people.

Participation

All people deserve the right to work and to participate in God’s creation. The joy of accomplishing a task and performing honest labor should be made available to all people.

Protection for the Poor and Vulnerable

Society exists in a balance between those with power, and those without it. The vulnerable – those with disabilities – and the poor must be protected from those with power who choose to wield it in an unjust manner.

Solidarity

“Love your neighbor as yourself” – this commandment extends beyond the boundaries of any town, state or country. The principle of solidarity encourages all people to reach out to their brothers and sisters in need

and to help them, even if they live halfway around the world.

Stewardship

Everything we have – even our own lives – is a gift from God. Our talents, our time and our financial resources are not our own, but God’s. The same goes for the natural resources we so often take for granted.

Responsibilities and Limits of Government

Governments, while created for the common good, sometimes overstep their boundaries. The Church teaches that all governments should seek to operate at the lowest level of organization possible – striving to solve problems at the source, with those who understand them best, and not through oppressive force.

Human Equality

God made all humans equal, including those of different ethnicity and race, and in different stages of life. No one person is of more value than another.

Common Good

It is especially important in our society to promote the common good – the social well-being and development of the “human group.” If we consider the entire human race as one family, the common good urges us to support our brothers and sisters so that they may reach their full potential.

Lay Association of the Faithful

The Family Rosary Movement of Reparation to the Immaculate Heart

Although many Catholics probably own a Rosary, many still find themselves daunted by the prayer, and the beads remain generally untouched. On the other side of the spectrum, some would go so far to say that devotion to Mary and usage of her images compete with the Catholic Liturgy, hindering ecumenism, while inspiring “neo-inconclasm.” Thus many parishes have gone to a point of removing statues of Our Lady from the sanctuaries.

Inspired by St. Pope John Paul II’s 2002 Apostolic Letter, *Rosarium Virgins Mariae*, Keith Febrero became aware of “the urgent need to counter a certain crisis of the Rosary which in the present historical and theological context can risk being wrongly devalued, and therefore no longer taught to the younger generation.” Also in the words of the great pontiff, “There are some who think that the centrality of the Liturgy, rightly stressed by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, necessarily entails giving lesser importance to the Rosary.” Yet, as Pope Paul VI made clear, not only does this prayer not conflict with the Liturgy, it sustains it, since it serves as an excellent introduction and a faithful echo of the Liturgy, enabling people to participate fully and interiorly in it and to reap its fruits in their daily lives.

Seeing this need, Keith felt called to begin a Lay Association of the Faithful: The Family Rosary Movement of Reparation to the



People of all ages gather each Monday night, and on the first Saturday of the month to pray and fellowship together with the Family Rosary Group.

Immaculate Heart. Their mission is to increase Marian devotion, particularly through praying the Rosary as a community. Although the association has existed for the past 16 years, it only became active at St. John Apostle & Evangelist this past summer.

The group meets on the first Saturday of each month, immediately following the 5 p.m. Saturday Mass. Together, they pray the Rosary with song, followed by a potluck dinner and time of fellowship. They also gather every Monday night at 7 p.m. in the chapel to pray the Rosary,

listen to a teaching on the life of a saint, and support each other.

Designed to be an intergenerational gathering, people in all different stages of life attend, from young families, to teenagers, young adults, and older members of the community. Keith, who serves as director of the group, reminds of the importance of coming together to pray as the Body of Christ.

“When you have a mixture of people, young people and the older generation, the younger generation can gain an appreciation for the Rosary and it gives the older generation a boost to

Lay Association of the Faithful *continued from page 7*

see young people praying,” Keith says. “It’s a support system of people who can motivate you in your relationship with God. ‘Where two or more are gathered, there I am in their midst’ – when we gather together, we embody the mystical body of Christ in a tangible way.”

The focus on the Rosary and the saints also serves as an opportunity for people to invest in their personal spiritual growth.

“The Rosary is a tool for growing and becoming a saint,” Keith says. “Not only do we recite a prayer, but

it’s also an opportunity to meditate on the life of Christ, through Mary. As we meditate on Jesus’ life, we’re more able to practice the virtues. The saints are concrete examples of living out the Mysteries of the Rosary. When we look at the saints, they were people like us who lived out the faith.”

Keith also hopes that growing in prayer and learning about the lives of the saints will deepen people’s relationship with God, and in turn, inspire them to be more involved in service and the life of the parish.

“We’re hoping the events help people with their individual relationship with Christ and as they grow spiritually on their own, they’ll become more active in the parish,” he says.

All are invited to attend both the First Saturday devotion and/or the Monday night gatherings.

“We invite all parishioners,” Keith says. “Anyone who is sincerely striving to grow in sanctity, a person who wants to become a saint, and a person who wishes to increase their knowledge of the saints – anyone can come.”

If you would like more information on the Family Rosary Group, please email info@shway.org. You can also learn more about The Family Rosary Movement of Reparation to the Immaculate Heart at www.shway.org. Our next First Saturday devotion will take place Oct. 7, immediately following the 5 p.m. Mass.

New Head Usher *continued from front cover*

Though he and his family are new to our parish, John brings more than 16 years of experience as an usher and says that he often draws upon the customer-first experience he provides in his role as a NAPA Auto Parts assistant store manager to serve his fellow parishioners.

“God is first, but we want to make sure the parishioners’ stay at Mass is as fruitful as possible,” he says.

As for his family, John says he feels like they’re giving back to the warm, welcoming spirit they felt when they first arrived at our church’s door.

“I’m so glad I’m able to do it, because God has a plan for everyone,” John continues. “My talent is helping people and ushering is just a way to do it.”



As John Wheeler notes, the Ushers Ministry welcomes volunteers “from 8 to 80” and is always looking for people who would like to help. Please contact John at jwheeler42@gmail.com to learn more!