

§ Pastor's Reflection >

One very little word dramatizes and summarizes the ascension of Jesus. That one very little word is UP. It appears three times in the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles. First, Luke tells us that in his gospel, he "dealt with all that Jesus did and taught until the day he was taken UP." Second, Luke says that as the disciples were looking on, Jesus was lifted UP. Third, this story concludes by having two men dressed in white telling the apostles, "This Jesus who has been taken UP from you into heaven will return the same way..." Clearly and concisely the ascension of Jesus has to do with his being taken UP.

When the author of Acts of the Apostles says that Jesus was taken UP into heaven he creates more questions than answers. For instance, how far is UP? Just where is heaven? Is heaven inside or outside of our infinitely expansive universe of trillions of light years full of billions of stars?

These questions are not answered in today's first reading or in any other reading. In fact, Luke indicates that we are looking in the wrong direction and asking the wrong questions when the two men in white garments upbraid the apostles by asking them, "Why are you standing there looking at the sky?" Did they think Jesus was going to a joyride in the sky and would come zooming back to them in a little while?

Whatever they were looking and hoping for, neither Luke nor the apostles had the astrophysical terminology to explain Jesus' ascension. So they used simple terms such as "taken up" and "lifted up" to describe the fact of Jesus' disappearance soon after his resurrection. Luke had to get Jesus off the stage in order to bring on the next acts, namely, the acts of the apostles after they are empowered by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Simply put, Jesus had to go UP so the Holy Spirit could come DOWN and the apostles could go OUT.

Today's reading from Matthew's Gospel provides the climactic closure to this celebration of Jesus' ascension. Once again, it is another little word that provides the clue to our appreciation of this feast day...GO. The Jesus of Matthew's Gospel does not give his disciples a chance to get stiff necks watching him go UP into the heavens. Rather, he gives them their earthly agenda. He tells them, "GO, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded of you." There is no time for sky gazing, it is time to get UP and GO.

In the beginning of his gospel, Matthew associated the name Emmanuel with the birth of Jesus and tells us that it means "God is with us." Here at the end of his gospel, he returns to the concept that Jesus isn't going away, but staying with us for always, Jesus promises, "Behold, I am with you always, until the end of time."

This is our lesson for today. The ascension of Jesus reminds up that He is not with us in his physical body, but He is very much with us in his mystical body, which is the church. He is the head of that body and we are the members. Jesus is with us in his sacramental body of the Eucharist. At communion, we receive not the dead body of Jesus, but his risen body, his loving and glorified presence. Today we once again give praise and thanks to Jesus who is with us and within us. "Go in peace to love and to serve the Lord." This is our Ascension Agenda.



Stewardship Report:



Revenue

April 28th :	7445.80
Faith Direct:	1296.25
Total Offertory:	8742.05
Last Year:	10616.35
Poor Box:	101.62
Every Penny Counts Box:	74.72

Number of Adult Envelopes: 243
Number of Children's Envelopes: 9
Number of Faith Direct donors: 34
Number of Registered Households: 623

Second Collection: Our second collection *this week* will be for our regular **Building and Maintenance Fund**. This monthly collection enables us to make continuing repairs, upkeep and improvements to the parish and school buildings as well as our parish grounds. May we suggest a contribution of \$10 per household? Better yet! Match Father Jeff & Father Bob's \$20 contribution!



Votive Lights

The votive lights burning from
Sunday, May 4th through
Saturday, May 10th:

At the *Shrine of the Sacred Heart*: **For the Special Intentions of:** Father Jerry & Charles Pouliot (birthday) and **For the Happy Repose of:** George Kosko & Gordon Clark

At the *Shrine of the Madonna and Child*: **For the Special Intentions of:** The Parish Sick List; The Ferrara Family and Friends & in Thanks Giving



Congratulations Saint Matthias School!

Lenten Shoe Drive: Thanks to the generosity of our school families, friends and parishioners, our 7th grade class was able to collect approximately 350 pairs of shoes during Lent towards their 600 pair goal! The shoes were packed and shipped to Ghana where they will be resoled and re-sold to raise money that will help train farmers in sustainable techniques that yield more food and help to protect the earth. Thank you for your help in this project to make a difference!

Recycling Goal Achieved!: Our school recently received a bonus check in the amount of \$200 for meeting their paper recycling goal! The goal was to recycle 15% more paper between October 2007 and March 2008 then was recycled in the same time period the previous year. Thank you to everyone who brings their paper to our Abitibi Paper Recycling bin in the back parking lot! Not only are you helping to beautify our environment and preserve trees, but you are helping our school to raise some much needed funds! Please continue to be faithful stewards of creation by bringing your paper products to our dumpster for recycling. You can bring newspapers, scrap paper, magazines, small catalogs and junk mail to be recycled. Please: no cardboard, phone books, plastic bags or other debris. Thanks for your support!

Other Items of Note:

Bulletin Advertisers Wanted!: Each week we are able to produce our Parish Bulletin through the generous support of our advertisers. Just take a look at the back of our bulletin and see all the businesses who support our parish! If you have a business, consider advertising in one of the available spaces on our bulletin cover. Diocesan Publications of New Cumberland, PA works with our advertisers to be able to publish our weekly bulletin at **NO COST** to our parish! Help us continue to bring you important information on the liturgical, educational and social life of our parish. Please contact Tara in the rectory for more information regarding advertising. A Diocesan representative will be visiting our parish this coming week.

Mother's Day Novena: Cards for this year's Novena will be sold after all masses by the Ladies of Charity. Make an offering to purchase a card or spiritual bouquet so that a special mother in your life (living or deceased) can be remembered at our Masses during the Mother's Day Novena. Cards will also be available in the rectory office during regular business hours.

Find Support and Understanding As You Grieve: For those who have experienced significant losses in their lives, St. Matthias Parish offers an opportunity to obtain grief support. Sessions are held at 9AM each Saturday in the school library. For more information please contact - Miriam Jacik MSN, MSPsy at (301) 345-6054.

The Word Made Flesh- Letting out the Light of the Sacred through Painting: Father Jerry will be teaching an artist workshop at the Washington Theological Union where he is an Artist in Residence. Workshop dates are June 18th, 20th, 25th and 27th from 10am until noon at a cost of \$200. This workshop will show you how to do "the visual reality check" and go ahead on your spiritual journey. If you find God's inspiration in writings and ideas, his fingerprints in nature, so you should be able to see traces of his touch in you. This art studio workshop will help you to start by taking a look at your own inspired image "expressed" onto canvas through the act of painting. For information, contact Enrollment Services: 202-541-5210; admissions@wtu.edu; www.wtu.edu

Run for Vocations: Runners and walkers of all experience levels are invited to join in the FUN-FAITH-FITNESS for the upcoming Marine Corps Marathon, Half Marathon and 10K held on the last Sunday of October. It's a unique opportunity to meet others, get in great shape, support our Church and accomplish an amazing goal! Team events are planned starting in April and include: optional group workouts, casual breakfast and dinner meetings, Mass and a team celebration. Information is available in the pamphlet racks or by contacting **Carol Flannery** at flanneryc@adw.org or calling **301-583-4584**.

Camp St. Charles: Drop in during the Open House to see how your children can experience two fun-filled weeks at Camp St. Charles for a reasonable price and see how close we are. For 56 years, thousands of children have been making friends, learning to work together and developing an appreciation for creation while camping out, horseback riding, challenge courses, archery, arts and interactions with animals! Located in beautiful Southern Maryland, Camp St. Charles is fully accredited with American Camp Association, certified by the State of Maryland and run by the Salvatorian Fathers and Brothers and Lay Salvatorians. For more information or directions, go to www.campstcharles.com or call 301-934-8799.

St. Matthias School Raffle 2008

The Raffle Drawing for
Monday, April 28th:

The Bernard Family of
Bowie, MD **won \$350**

They are the winners AND the sellers!



Mass Intentions for the Seventh Week of Easter

Monday, May 5

8:30 am Gordon Clark & George Kosko

Tuesday, May 6

8:30 am Guadalupe M. Montesa (Living)

Wednesday, May 7

8:30 am Julia Staelens

Thursday, May 8

8:30 am Fran Zatorski

Friday, May 9

8:30 am Roger S. Guevara (Living—birthday)

Saturday, May 10—Vigil: Pentecost

3:30 pm to 4:30pm—Confessions Fr. Bob

5:00 pm Mother's Day Novena Fr. Bob

Sunday, May 11: Pentecost

8:00 am Suzanne Ruth May Fr. Jeff

9:30 am All Mothers Living & Deceased Fr. Jeff

11:30am All Mothers Living & Deceased Fr. Clarito

Please Pray for: †The Sick and Homebound In Our Parish:

Pearl Aitcheson; Virgie Azarcon; Audrey Brown; Linda Bryans; Dan Comeaux; Fidel dela Cuesta; Lisa Cuthbert; Mary Ennis; Lisa Farland; Karen Fisher; Ferris (Bo) George; Joseph Harrison; Robert Hoke; Charles Jones; Katie Kennedy; Robyn Kirby; Nancy Maimone; Bob Martin; Carol McDonagh; Willie Moore; Larry Murphy; Michael & Rosemarie Nardoizzi; David Obi; Peter O'Neill; Thomas Opalski; Joseph Otero; Charles Shryock; Ryan Zawada†

For Our Military Serving in Afghanistan or Iraq: Spc.

Michael J. Chiddo; Brian A. Densmore; Ryan A. Morgan† **For Our**

Deceased: Msgr. Peter Long †Names will be placed on our prayer list for three weeks. To add a name or to request continuing prayers, call Tara Guevara at 301-459-4814 or email tguevara@stmatthias.org.

Youth News

"How Many Teens Do You Know"? There are many teens in our parish who are not in our youth group. We want the participation of ALL of our parish teens! Our current youth group members will be looking to introduce themselves to youth not currently in the group. Are you one of them? **Keep an eye on this space for an up and coming contest!**

Finding His Presence in Song Through Photography & Images: Our youth continue to work diligently towards completing this year's artistic presentation. Please remember that they will be taking pictures around church and in the community. If they ask for your assistance, please lend them a hand and support their efforts as they strive to find God's presence in the world around them!

Faith Formation:

Baptism: Please read the Bulletin carefully. **Families must be registered for at least six months before any sacraments including Baptism may be administered.** Look at it from another angle. Six months will give you enough time to decide if you really want to be a part of this parish; and, it will also show us your commitment to this parish which is a key component within any community. Registration forms are available in the church and in the rectory office.