

The Ameliorator

St. Amelia Church

September-October 2010

Vol. 15, No. 5

Tonawanda, NY

Father Mark Named Pastor For Orleans County Parishes

Bishop Edward U. Kmiec has appointed Father Mark Noonan as pastor of St. Mary's Church in Holley and St. Mark's Church in Kendall. The parishes are in eastern Orleans county. Father Mark assumed his new duties on August 23.

"This is bad news for our parish", Father Tom said at the Farewell Mass on August 22. "Father Mark has invigorated and vitalized so many areas of our parish life. He will be sorely missed. For instance, you may know the Pearl Street Grill. The last thing you would expect to find in there is a Catholic priest talking to 150 young people in their twenties and thirties about the Sacrament of Penance. That's the kind of thing Father Mark does. You may know there is a pagoda on the grounds of Hamilton School. You can see high school kids hanging out there at night as you drive by. But some nights, if you look closely, you'll see an adult among the teenagers, dressed in black with a Roman collar. It's Father Mark, talking to the kids. I could go on. But you see what I mean when I say his leaving is bad news for us. At the time same time, it's very good news for the folks in Orleans county."



Dinner Planned to Observe Principal's Fifteenth Year



In the fall of 1995, Jim Mulé attained his life-long dream of becoming a grammar school principal, as he took the reins of Saint Amelia School. Four short years later, he flew to Washington to shake hands with President Bill Clinton and accept the school's designation by the U.S. Department of Education as a National School of Excellence.

Under his leadership, the school has also been certified as excellent by the Council on Private Education and has been named a National School of Character. In addition, the school is a New York State School of Excellence, and is Middle States Accredited.

"At a time when Catholic elementary schools

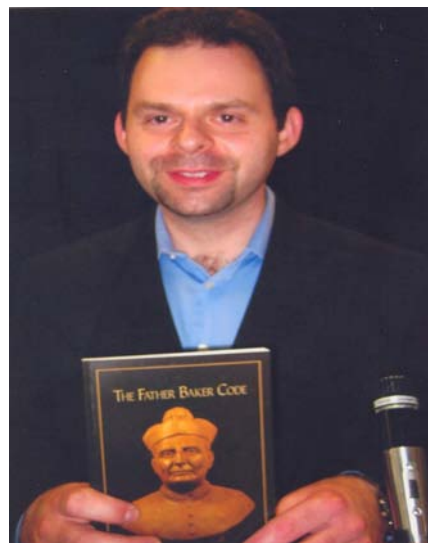
throughout the country are endangered, or merging, or closing, our school is thriving, with 540 pupils. Many schools call themselves excellent; our school did not appropriate that label to itself: we were designated excellent by the people in Albany and Washington", Father Tom notes. "Jim Mulé is the reason for all of this."

School parents, alumni, parents of alumni, and "friends of Jim" will gather at Antonio's Banquet and Conference Center, 7708 Niagara Falls Boulevard in Wheatfield, on Thursday November 11, for a dinner to celebrate Jim's fifteenth anniversary as principal. A cocktail hour from 6 til 7 is planned, with a cash bar. A sit-down dinner at 7 will be followed by a brief and entertaining program, with the inimitable Sean Beiter as master of ceremonies. Tickets are \$25 each, and include a gift to Jim. Invitations are being mailed in September. If you don't get a letter in the mail by October 15, and want to attend, please call the rectory at 836 0011 to make a reservation.



Sr. Melissa Scholl, OSF, spoke at Masses July 17 and 18 on the work of her community, the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, in their missions in Brazil, Bolivia, and Jamaica.

Faces in the News



John Koerner poses with his new book, "The Father Baker Code". John spoke at two coffee hours July 18 on the miracles of Father Baker.



Father Roy Herberger, pastor of Saints Columba and Brigid Parish in Buffalo, talked about the plight of undocumented aliens at the Emmaus Mens Spirituality Group on July 10.

Fall Dinner Will Laud Stewardship of Talent

A November tradition at our parish is the autumn dinner sponsored by the Holy Name Society. This year's dinner takes place on Saturday evening, November 6, at 5:45 p.m. in Don Miller Hall. A full-course dinner is served, featuring outstanding food from the Market in the Square, prepared and served by the Market's chefs, ably assisted by Holy Name members.

The dinner is an occasion to recognize several parishioners who have served the parish well by their stewardship of talent. You can nominate a parishioner for consideration for this honor by sending a note to the Rectory or by e-mailing the pastor at tfm210@hotmail.com, with "Recognition" in the subject line. September 15 is the deadline for nominations. Two outstanding altar servers will also be recognized at the dinner. Consult the weekly bulletin for ticket information.

Father Mark Outlines "Pathway to Peace" In Theology on Tap Presentation

By Lauren Daniel

In a society that often promotes worldly endeavors, it is a blessing for young Catholics to find support in the bi-monthly Theology on Tap events. Each of the scheduled presentations explores a new avenue of the Catholic Faith, while at the same time providing listeners with the tools needed to deepen their own understanding of the Faith.



Young adults listen to Father Mark's talk at the Pearl Street Grill.

The June 6th event with Father Mark Noonan was especially beneficial, as he discussed a true treasure of Catholicism: confession. Father Mark's talk, "Pathway to the Peace You've Been Longing For", highlighted the many reasons

why confession is such a significant part of our spiritual growth. More importantly, he described confession as an act of love, through which we as God's children are shown great mercy and true love by the experience of God's forgiveness.

In addition, the talk addressed a topic that many Catholics avoid or even disregard as a part of their daily lives. Having a concrete explanation as to why confession is such an integral aspect of our Faith helped shed light on the necessity of the Sacrament.

Father Mark's charismatic personality and solid Catholic teaching captivated his young adult listeners. His accessible descriptions also helped to inspire young Catholics to incorporate confession into their daily lives. Overall, "Pathway to the Peace You're Longing For" provided event-goers with a renewed sense of their Faith, as well as a clear cut path to find that peace through confession.

Parishioner Lauren Daniel is a volunteer at The Station of the Cross Catholic Radio. This report appeared initially in the Station's newsletter, and is reprinted here with permission.

"Songfest Concert" Features Outstanding Composers

Our parish is hosting a rare concert that will feature three of the country's top liturgical composers and musicians. Marty Haugen, Michael Joncas, and Tony Alonzo come to St. Amelia's for a concert on Friday, October 15 at 7 p.m.

"They will present their compositions in an informal, spiritual, joyous format", explains Gail Shepherd, who was music director here in the late nineties, and is helping to organize this event for the Buffalo Catholic Musicians Guild. "This is contemporary, religious, liturgical music."

The organizers are suggesting a free-will offering of \$10 per person.

The Question Box



Speaking on Pro-Life Topics

Dear Father Tom,

I heard Father Pavone, of the Priests for Life Movement, on the radio. He is urging us to ask our priests to speak out more often on the pro-life issues. Why don't you do this?

- Pro-lifer
Tonawanda, NY

Dear Pro-lifer,

I believe that we do speak often on pro-life issues. I believe also that some priests become so taken with particular issues that they tend to speak too much about them. I have known parishes where the people for years have never heard any homily that is not about abortion. There are parishes where the pastor's pet cause - Divine Mercy, Medjugorje, Padre Pio, etc. - finds its way into every homily. I think this is a tremendous disservice, because the people are not experiencing the richness, the fullness, the variety of the Church's message. The priest, on any given weekend, is supposed to preach on the Scripture readings for that day, or on a text from the Mass. And he is not supposed to twist those texts to support his own particular causes, worthy though they may be.

- Father Tom

School Services for All Parishioners

Dear Mr. Mulé,

You mentioned once that the school provides services for people who are not enrolled in the school. I am curious as to how that works.

- Senior Citizen

Dear Senior,

Some of the questions I get are hard; this one is easy! My vision is that since the school is supported (financially, prayerfully, morally) by the entire parish, then all of the people of the parish should be able to use what the school has to offer. Some of the ways this happens:

Parents who home-school their children sometimes need advice, which we readily provide. We are also able to provide specific programs for them in some areas of study. For instance, we recently provided computer-based home programs in French and Spanish for some home-schooled children.

We offer a summer enrichment program in Reading and Math. Originally this was envisioned for our own pupils, but over the years, we find that most of the kids in this program are public schoolers. Our program is in fact recommended to parents by teachers in the Ken-Ton District. Typically kids advance at least one grade level in proficiency in this program.

During the school year, we have an after-school program, where kids stay until their parents pick them up after work. This program enrolls a good number of kids who do not attend our school. The great advantage of course is that when the kids are picked up, their homework is done, they have had gym time and computer time, and they've had their snacks.

Sometimes parents get an opinion from the public schools that they wonder about. For instance, a child might be designated as gifted and talented, or as a child with special needs. You can get a second opinion easily, by calling the school and setting up an interview with our psychologist or other professionals.

Kids who are in high school sometimes have problems with some of their subjects. We have people who can provide expert tutoring for them, and we can usually do it for free. This service is open to all high school pupils, not just school alumni.



We have a state-of-the-art computer lab, and it is dormant after 3 p.m. each day. I sometimes wonder if there are senior citizens who want to enhance their computer skills. We can help them do that.

And of course, our summer day camp, and summer sports camps are open to all kids. The school also provides trained lectors and altar servers for funerals throughout the year. This is a great service to families who have supported our school through the years, at their time of bereavement.

These are some of the ways we currently serve people who are not registered in our school. But our teachers and I want to expand these services. So if you have some ideas, please let me know!

- James Mulé
Principal

The principal would like to see adults using the computer lab after school hours.

What's in store for the future?

Dear Monsignor,

With Father Mark leaving, what's in store for the future? Will the diocese send us another priest? Will there be a cut-back in liturgical and other services?

- Concerned

Dear Concerned,

I am also concerned. I have been speaking with diocesan personnel officials, but as of now, no decisions have been made.

In the short term, I do not plan on any cut-backs. We will continue to use the services of retired priests, who are, thankfully, ready and willing to help. For the long term, I simply do not know at this point.

Meantime, there are a couple of ways you can help us. First, if you have someone who needs the Sacrament of the Sick, please do not wait until the last minute to call the priest. Do it sooner rather than later. If you wait until the last minute, you are likely to be disappointed.

Second, if you call the Rectory, and the priest does not return your call immediately, please be patient. I like the sign that you sometimes see in emergency rooms that says people are not taken care of on a first-come basis, but on the basis of the urgency of their need. The same is true of calls to a priest.

- Monsignor



A Home Mass during the estival bike trek helps kids understand how the Eucharist was celebrated in the early days of the Church.



First-grader Joseph Iglesias demonstrates his proficiency with the hula hoop at the St. Amelia Summer Day Camp.



O'Hara Coach Brian Lamping instructs participants on serving techniques at the Volleyball Camp held August 9-13.



Thru the Lens



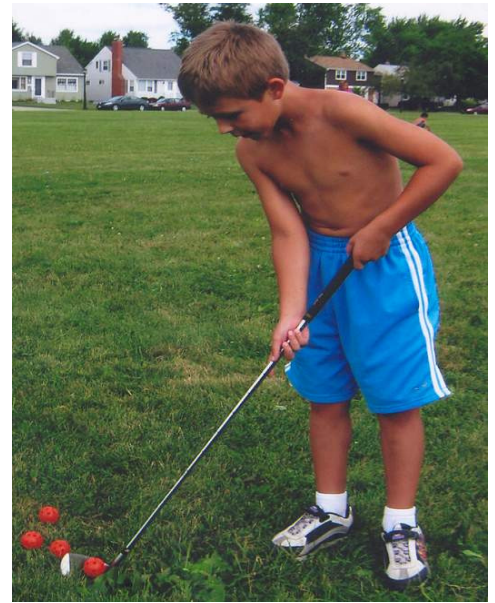
Alex Rusch, a Grade 8 student at Hoover, shares his green-thumb talents in caring for the flowers outside The Lighthouse.



A gaggle of giggly girls settle in their tent at the 2010 "Tour de Niagara" Bike Trek. They are Madison Badgley, Natalie Gaulin, Kaitlyn Hart, and Frankie Gugino.



Vacation Bible Schoolers hear a story from the Word of God presented by Jody Reeser.



Second-grader Gabe Diel practices his golf swing at the St. Amelia Summer Day Camp.



Father Tom and Don Potter prepare to take part in the Sean Burke Memorial Golf Tournament August 16 to benefit the tuition assistance fund at our school.



"Happiness is a chocolate doughnut" could be the motto of Jackson Zenosky, at the July Doughnut Sunday under the blue tents.



Summertime is service time for many of our young people. St. Amelia youth prepare lunch at the St. Luke Mission of Mercy.



A Surprise Party on the feast of St. Amelia on July 10 featured a picnic supper for attendees at the 4:30 Mass. Marissa Olivieri and her brother Jacob pose for the peripatetic photographer.

The Ameliorator

bi-monthly newsletter from Saint Amelia Church
210 Saint Amelia Drive Tonawanda, NY 14150

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Tonawanda, NY
Permit No. 74

Visit Us Online:

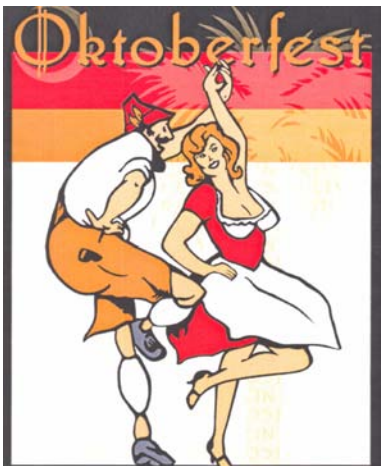
www.stamelia.com

www.stameliaschool.org

www.stameliayouthministry.webs.com

The Ameliorator is the bi-monthly publication of Saint Amelia Church. We mail it to members of our Saint Amelia Family, that is, registered parishioners, adult alumni of our school, and parents of children who attend our school. We also send it to people who live in the geographical area served by our Church, in order to keep them informed about who we and what we are doing. If you do not wish to receive The Ameliorator, you can have your name deleted from our mailing list by simply calling 716-836-0011.

Parish Will Observe Oktoberfest With German Mass and Dinner



“Gemutlichkeit” is the German word that connotes friendship, fellowship, and community. It’s appropriate to describe the spirit of our annual Oktoberfest Dinner, which is set for October 2, at 5:45 p.m. in Don Miller Hall. Tickets are affordably priced at \$12 each. Chef Joseph Kroczyński plans a meal featuring the classic German specialties: bratwurst, roast pork loin, potato pancakes, German potato salad, apple sauce, vegetables, and dessert. German beverages will be available for purchase at nominal prices.

The dinner is preceded by a “German Mass” at 4:30 p.m. in Church. Music at the Mass, and at the dinner, will be provided by the renowned Bergholz Band. The band will play after dinner til 10 p.m.

Tickets are available at the Rectory and at the school. No tickets will be sold at the door.