

The Ameliorator

St. Amelia Church

January-February 2011

Vol. 16, No. 1

Tonawanda, NY

The Catholic Church in Japan: An Interview with Father Hahn



For two months this year, our parish enjoyed the ministry of Father Frank J. Hahn, OMI, a missionary in Japan. Many people wanted to know more about him, so the Ameliorator interviewed him.

What brought you to Japan? I graduated from Fallon High School, which was run by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. I joined that community after high school. In the novitiate one of my fellow novices was a young man from Japan. I learned a lot from him about Japan. When our community was looking for volunteers to work in Japan, I signed up.

What is your connection with St. Amelia's? My family is from St. Bartholomew's, on Buffalo's east side, and I was ordained there. But by that time, 1974, my family had moved to Tonawanda. Msgr. McHugh invited me to stay at St. Amelia's when I came home, and his successors as pastor continued that hospitality, which I appreciate very much.

What kind of work do you do in Japan? Mainly

parish work, not too different from what a parish priest would do in the States. But Catholics are a tiny minority of the Japanese people. Less than one percent of the population is Christian, and about half of them are Roman Catholic. My first assignment was two small mission stations covering an area the size of Erie County, and all told we had only about 100 Catholics. Now I have a large parish (by Japanese standards) outside of Osaka, with 630 members.

Why are such a tiny minority of Japanese Christians? Japan has never been very open to Christianity. In the mid 16th century, St. Francis Xavier brought the faith to Japan. He was followed by other Jesuits, and some Franciscans, and they had great success. Toward the end of the 16th century the number of Catholics approached 10% of the population. But the Japanese are leery of foreign influences. They were alarmed at the rapid spread of our faith, and they began to persecute Catholics. In a twenty year period, around 1600, there were 20,000 martyrs. That alarmed the Japanese even more. They could not understand how anyone could die for his faith. The persecution intensified, and the Church in Japan went underground for about 250 years.

Then Japan opened up to Western culture? Yes, around 1850, with Admiral Perry. Then in the 1880's they allowed foreign missionaries to work again in their country. Again there was some persecution, but it stopped because of pressure from other countries. But while the number of Catholics is a tiny percentage of the population, the Church has been a major influence in the Japanese society, mainly due to its schools, hospitals, and social work. Many of Japan's political and business leaders were educated in Catholic schools.

What's in the future for you? I will continue my ministry in Japan for the near future, but beyond that, as I look at retirement, I am not sure. I could come back to work in the States, or I could stay in Japan.

How Your Family Can Thrive On Less Than Two Incomes

by Cathi Brese Doebler

We've all felt the pressure to "keep up with the Joneses". Often it seems like it takes two incomes to survive in today's economy. But what if that's not true for your family? What if your family can thrive on less than two full-time salaries and flourish by spending more time together?

In the workshop I presented at St. Amelia's recently, participants learned about four moves toward financial order, including:

- ◆ Looking at your current spending and work costs
- ◆ Getting on the same page about what are "needs" versus "wants"
- ◆ Agreeing on changes
- ◆ Setting goals and taking action

When we looked at work costs, many were surprised at how little you actually bring home with the second income in a household. This is a sample of work expenses, for a salary of \$40,000 in 2008, based on average costs.

<u>WORK EXPENSE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Federal Income Tax (15%)	\$6,000
Social Security and Medicare (\$7.65%)	\$3,060
State Income Tax (3%)	\$1,200
Child Care (\$200 weekly for 50 weeks)	\$10,000
Car Payments (\$250 a month)	\$3,000
Car Insurance	\$1,200
Car Fuel and Maintenance (58.5 cents per mile; 33.4 miles per day)	\$4,885
Work clothing, dry cleaning, and other professional appearance costs	\$750
Lunches out (\$50 per week for 50 weeks)	\$2,500
Convenience foods rather than cooking	\$1,000
Ordering food or dining out rather than cooking	\$3,000
Gifts, special occasions for work parties	\$300
Housekeeping help	\$1,400



In this example, expenses add up to \$38,295 on a salary of \$40,000.

My book, *Ditch the Joneses, Discover Your Family* is the definitive guide on how to thrive on less than two incomes. It is available at Life Resources on Niagara Falls Boulevard, Benders in Clarence, and online at www.ditchthe.com. A CD workbook is also available.

A Toast for Our Principal on His Fifteenth Anniversary



Let us now raise a glass for a toast
To the one who has given the most
To our school, for you know
And the record does show
That we do have good reason to boast!

As our leader he has done such great stuff
And if that were not just quite enough
He has brought us to see
Just how great we can be
(Though some days it has been a bit rough!)

Excellence is the goal he has sought
And we strive for that goal as we ought
So we thank him tonight
As is proper and right
And we toast this fine man with this
thought:

We are grateful to you for the years
You have led us through laughter and tears.
So tonight we do say:
"Here's to you, Jim Mulé
We salute you with wine and with beers!"

*This toast was written and presented by
Father Tom at the dinner on November 11.*

Movie Review

"Waiting for Superman" is a Wake-up Call for Our Schools by James Mulé

This movie highlights the fact that the American public school system is in crisis, failing millions of students, producing as many drop-outs as graduates, and threatening our economic future. By 2020, the United States will have 123 million high-skilled jobs to fill, and fewer than 50 million Americans qualified to fill them.



Powerful insights are offered from some of those at the leading edge of educational innovation, including Bill Gates, Geoffrey Canada, and Michele Rhee, chancellor of the public schools in the District of Columbia. The film is an inspiring call for reform in our public schools, and presents a startling and disturbing picture.

Seeing the movie was a powerful experience for me as an educator. It was an occasion for me to thank God for all the wonderful teachers in my life, for calling me to become an educator, and for the dedication of the teachers at our school. The film's message is relevant for all Americans, regardless of where their children attend school, since the crisis will impact the quality of life in our country in the future. I highly recommend this movie.

LETTERS

Dear Ameliorator Staff:

I'm one of the people living in St. Amelia's geographical area who receive your publication without being a parish member. I always read it cover to cover – it's interesting and well-written.

Thanks to an article in the September-October issue, I was able to attend Friday evening's songfest with Michael Joncas, Marty Haugen and Tony Alonzo. I am a member of Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, and I brought with me a friend from Clarence Presbyterian Church and one from St. Joseph University parish. It was an unforgettable experience for all of us, and it fortified us in our faith.

Thank you for sharing so generously with the community.

Marjorie S. Torrell
Tonawanda

Dear Father:

Every time we attend Mass, my husband and I come early so that we may spend extra time praying, as do many others. Unfortunately, other members of your parish act as if they were entering a movie theater, socializing with their friends and families, totally disrupting those of us praying and seeking peace of mind and soul. I seek God's voice, not the voices of those entering loudly proclaiming their health or how lucky they were at the casino.

It is not my intention to ask that they cease socializing; however, I believe it should be confined to the narthex and end as they open the doors to enter the main church.

Worshipper
Tonawanda, NY

Dear Worshipper:

I commend you for seeking time for personal prayer in Church. In an ideal world, people would socialize in the narthex, and then enter the Church proper in silence and reverence. But as you are well aware, we do not live in an ideal world.

My suggestion would be to avail yourself of the times we have set aside specifically for personal prayer. We have the "Hour of Power" each weekday from 7 to 8 a.m. We offer Eucharistic Adoration on Mondays throughout the day. We encourage people to take part in the "Night of Two Hearts" on the first Friday and first Saturday of each month. The Church is open for personal prayer each weekday until 6 p.m.

Father Tom

Dear Msgr. Maloney:

What a wonderful evening! My husband and I greatly enjoyed the dinner honoring Jim Mulé and his service to the St. Amelia community. Everyone was so welcoming, and the food was outstanding!

It was nice to witness the celebration of Jim's dedication and hard work to benefit the students of St. Amelia School. Thank you for your leadership and for the efforts of the committee to make this a very special evening for Jim and for all who attended.

Carol A. Kostyniak
Secretary for Catholic Education
Diocese of Buffalo

Dear Father Tom and Father Ryszard:

Just a note to you at Thanksgiving time. I count my blessings, and I am grateful that you are having one-on-one conversations with our ninth graders about their spiritual lives. I appreciate that with your heavy schedules you find the time to meet with them and speak with them about their own personal faith. I am grateful for your care for them.

Parent of a ninth grader
Tonawanda, NY

Fast-a-thon Shows Youth Can Make a Difference



Francesca Harvey prepares soup for the feast ending the fast.

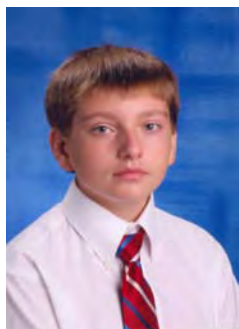
St. Amelia Youth undertook a 24-hour fast-a-thon to mark the beginning of advent and to raise funds for needy people. The fast began at 8 p.m. Friday, November 26, and ended after the 7 p.m. Mass on Saturday with a dinner cooked by the kids in the rectory kitchen. Dinner included soup, a pasta and cheese bake, and homemade bread baked by Father Ryszard.

"It was very spiritual and fulfilling," said Francesca Harvey. "We were fasting in union with the Lord, and for him, and it brought us closer to him." Kara Zimmerman added, "It was well worth the hunger to raise money to donate to people who are needy. We were not thinking about ourselves, but about others".

"I think it showed people you don't have to be an adult to do something significant for others," said Joe Kroczyński. "Even 14-year-old kids can help make a difference."

Youth Minister Kathy Waite arranged the event. Donated funds went to Harvest House, for use in aiding the needy.

Parish Recognizes Outstanding Altar Servers



Joe Kroczyński, a ninth-grader at Cardinal O'Hara, and Katherine Panzica, a junior at Kenmore East, were recipients of this year's awards for Outstanding Altar Servers, presented at the Prime Rib Dinner November 6.

Awards Are Given for Stewardship of Talent

The parish presented awards for noteworthy stewardship of talent at the Prime Rib Dinner on November 11. John Thur was recognized for his work as advisor to the board of the John Lodge McHugh Endowment Fund. Joe DeMarco was lauded for his service to the needy as a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Sean and Angel Beiter's valued volunteer service, in the parish and far beyond the parish, was recognized. Joe and Angie Tritto were thanked for their ministry in religious education and spiritual life.

John Thur



Joe De Marco



Sean and Angel Beiter



Joe and Angie Tritto



Alma McGillicuddy joins Pat and Joan O’Hanrahan at a luncheon prepared and served by eighth graders for senior citizens as a “thank-you” for their support through the years.



Members of the school bell choir provided entertainment at the senior citizens luncheon on November 30, featuring Christmas music.



*Thru
the
Lens*



Part of the crowd of 270 who gathered for dinner on November 11 at Antonio’s in Niagara Falls to celebrate Jim Mulé’s fifteenth year as school principal.



School children donated their Halloween candy, and prepared gift packages for U.S. troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.



School pupils had their own celebration of the principal’s fifteenth anniversary, compete with balloons, banners, and good things to eat.

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

www.stameliareled.weebly.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 are 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.

Page 8

The Ameliorator

January-February 2011

Irish Breakfast



The Irish are probably the only people in the world who make breakfast the main meal of the day. Join us on February 27 for

the traditional pre-Lenten Irish Breakfast. See the weekly bulletin for details.

Italian Festival



You don't have to be Italian to enjoy Italian food! So come for our own Italian Festival, on Saturday, February 5.

We'll gather at 5:30 for an aperitivo, then enjoy a classic meal. See the weekly bulletin for details.

School Alumni Invited to Observe Silver and Golden Anniversaries

If you graduated from our school in 1961 or 1986, we want you back! This year's graduation ceremony, set for June 21 will have a special feature. We will honor those who graduated 25 and 50 years ago.

"We're inviting back those who left these hallowed halls a quarter, and a half century ago", Father Tom said at the December Parish Council meeting. "We do this to recognize them, and honor them; but perhaps as important, the kids graduating today will be able to see where they can go in life with their St. Amelia education. We hope to provide a special meal for these alumni prior to the graduation ceremony - here in the cafeteria, where they used to eat congo bars and celery laced with peanut butter!" Invitations will be mailed in the spring.