



# St. John the Baptist

CATHOLIC CHURCH

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*Inviting Our Children to Get to Know Christ in the Blessed Sacrament*

## Don't Miss Our Parish Lenten Revival! *With the Dynamic Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers*

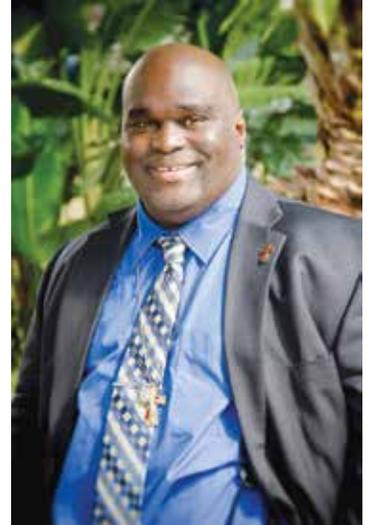
You don't want to miss this event!  
Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers will be speaking at Mass at 7 a.m., Thursday, March 16, and Friday, March 17. Additionally, he will be giving the following talks:

### **Thursday, March 16**

9 a.m. – Talk 1

#### *Apologetics 101: Seven Truths of the Church You Must Know To Defend Your Faith*

It seems as if the Catholic faith is either attacked or criticized by the culture on a daily basis. The primary goal is to replace the fundamental tenets of Catholicism with agnostic, relativistic and atheistic ways of thinking. In the face of these challenges, do we really know and understand our faith enough to defend it? In this lively presentation, Dynamic evangelist Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers will equip you with the tools you need to explain and defend the Catholic faith in the following areas – Scripture and Sacred Tradition, Authority and the Papacy, The Sacraments, Salvation and Grace, The Church, Mary and the Saints, and Church History.



7 p.m. – Talk 2

#### *Meeting Jesus in the Beauty and Truth of the Catholic Faith and Vocations*

*This talk is for the Confirmation class students, their parents, teachers and sponsors, and all high school-age children.*

Catholic speaker Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers will answer the questions, “What kind of relationship does God want with us?” and “Why should I listen to a Church

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## Don't Miss Our Parish Lenten Revival!

*continued from front cover*

that makes all of these rules that inhibit my freedom to do what I want?" by exploring the true meaning of love and how the proper formation of conscience prepares teens to make a gift of themselves in love.

### **Friday, March 17**

9 a.m. – Talk 3

#### *The Pursuit of Happiness: Finding True Joy in the Catholic Faith*

In this talk, Dynamic Catholic speaker Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers will explore the difference between "true happiness" and "feeling good," consider the ideological factors that hinder and impede the pursuit of happiness, examine the relationship between the Holy Spirit's Gift of Knowledge and the desire for happiness, and how true spiritual joy is found in obeying God's will.

7:30 p.m. – Talk 4

#### *Why Be Catholic?*

In this powerful and inspiring presentation, Catholic evangelist Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers will address the following questions asked by many fallen away Catholics – "Why should I listen to a Church that makes all of these rules that inhibit my freedom to do what I want?" and "What's the big deal about being Catholic and why does it matter?" After examining the truth and beauty of Divine Revelation, Deacon Harold will show how we unite ourselves to Jesus in an intimate and personal way through the sacraments and how we can spread the Gospel by the witness of our lives.

### **Getting to Know Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers**

Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers – known around the world as the "Dynamic Deacon" – is one of the most sought-after speakers in the Church today. He is a powerful and passionate evangelist and preacher whose no-nonsense approach to living and proclaiming the Catholic faith is sure to challenge and inspire those who hear him.

Deacon Harold travels across the United States and around the world speaking at conferences, workshops, retreats, parish missions, high schools, and young adult events – in short, to people of all ages and from all walks of life who desire to know Jesus intimately and enjoy a deeper personal relationship with Him.

His areas of expertise include marriage and family life, discerning the will of God, the Sacraments, the Church's vocational choices and how they are lived out, male spirituality, pro-life issues, evangelization, prayer, and many others.

Deacon Harold holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Economics and Business Administration from the University of Notre Dame, and a Master of Theological Studies Degree from the University of Dallas.

He co-hosts a weekly broadcast, "Living Stones," every Monday on Mater Dei Radio, and has appeared as a guest on numerous other national and international radio programs, including "Catholic Answers Live" and "Vocation Boom Radio." In addition, he is the host or co-host of several popular series on EWTN television, including "Made in His Image: Family Life Today," "Priests and Deacons: Ministers of Mercy," and "Grace Filled Living." Deacon Harold is also the author of the best-selling book, *Behold the Man: A Catholic Vision of Male Spirituality* published by Ignatius Press.

Retaining a deep love of Benedictine spirituality that he gained during his time discerning a call to that religious community, Deacon Harold is a Benedictine Oblate of Mount Angel Abbey. He is also a member of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars and the Confraternity of Catholic Clergy.

Most importantly, Deacon Harold is married to his lovely wife, Colleen, and they have four beautiful children. They live in Portland, Oregon, where Deacon Harold is assigned to Immaculate Heart Catholic Church.

A Letter From Our Pastor

## Personal Encounter with Christ

Dear Parishioners,

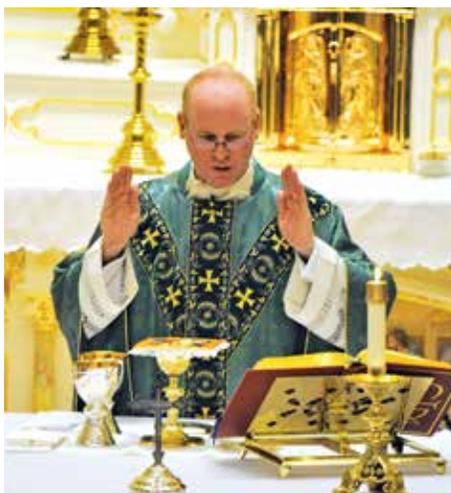
In 2013, Pope Francis issued his first significant work. It was what is called an “apostolic exhortation” titled *The Joy of the Gospel (Evangelii Gaudium* in Latin). In doing so, the pope offers advice and encouragement about how we should live our lives. This is worthy of our consideration as we enter into Lent.

The pope begins the exhortation by calling us to Christ. He says, “I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to allowing him to encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since ‘no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord’” (3).

This is a great invitation for us to answer this Lent to make every effort we can to make this happen. We encounter Jesus in our personal prayer, reading and meditating on Sacred Scripture and in a particular way in our focus on the Passion, which is where love was defined and exemplified. During Lent, a powerful meditation on the Passion of Jesus is by walking the Stations of the Cross on Fridays. We can’t help but be moved as these Stations illustrate Jesus’ love for us and, more than that, as they bring us right into each scene as we connect our struggles with those of Jesus in a powerful way.

We encounter His love in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, as when we come to Him with a contrite heart, He will forgive us every time. His mercy is his great love for us in all our brokenness.

We encounter His love in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, as we come together to participate in



the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as Jesus’ one true sacrifice is made present on the holy altar, just as if we were present at the foot of the cross 2,000 years ago. And, then we get to receive love incarnate in Jesus Himself.

That’s why, above all else, it is so important to make that commitment during Lent to get to every single Sunday Mass. But, it is in baptism that we have a special focus during Lent to prepare to renew the baptismal promises we

made so many years ago, to fulfill those vows and to live them.

Lent is meant to be transformative for us, that we grow in virtue and holiness and overcome areas of weakness, but also move us to share our faith with others. Once we heed the advice of Pope Francis and have this personal encounter with Christ, it makes sense for us to then share his basic Gospel message with others. What is the basic message? “Jesus Christ loves you; He gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you” (164). Pope Francis says that this is the *kerygma*, or basic message of the Gospel, which is one we must hear again and again in different ways in every moment of catechesis (164). May we know this beautiful Gospel message and share it with others.

In Christ,

*Fr. Butler*  
Fr. Butler, Pastor

## Mary's Garden of Holy Innocents

For Catholics, the pro-life verbiage is familiar. Phrases such as “life begins at conception” and “every life has value” are commonly spoken, believed, and even defended. However, in many cases, while we grieve the intentional loss of a child’s life through abortion, it can be easy to forget that there are women – and men – all around us who have also suffered the loss of a child. Current statistics show that as many as one in five pregnancies ends in loss through miscarriage. These parents, in many cases, hoped and prayed for their child, but now grieve alone the loss of a baby through miscarriage or stillbirth.

“There is a sense of loss that is experienced by the woman and family,” says Chuck Durancik, Bookkeeper at St. John the Baptist. “People don’t always realize that it is an emotional loss.”

Not only have Chuck and his wife experienced the loss of a baby through miscarriage, but two of his daughters have also suffered losses. One daughter miscarried at 20 weeks. Chuck’s other daughter lost one child during the first trimester and gave birth to a stillborn daughter at seven months.

“I know how she felt and how we felt,” Chuck says.

“She was able to hold the baby for a short while,” he adds, referring to his granddaughter born “sleeping” at seven months. “There’s a picture of her holding the baby, and she keeps that picture with all of the other family photos on display. It was such a loss.”

For many suffering the loss of a child before birth, they grieve without a treasured photo and, often, without even a grave site to visit. Here at St. John the Baptist, we hope that will change with the opening of Mary’s Garden of Holy Innocents, a place to bury pre-born babies in our parish cemetery.

The idea began to take shape after a number of parishioners attended a cemetery meeting and heard a diocesan representative explain the idea of dedicating a section in the cemetery in memory of children who have passed away, either through miscarriage or abortion. It spoke to the hearts of many who were there, and when

\$90,000 was donated explicitly for use in the cemetery, it didn’t take long for the idea of Mary’s Garden of Holy Innocents to be approved.

Families who lose a child in miscarriage will now have the opportunity to work with a local funeral director to obtain and inter their baby’s remains at no cost to the family. This section in the cemetery will hold 1,200 small caskets.

For those who have lost a child at any time in the past and were unable to bury their remains, there will also be an opportunity to have the baby’s name, or the family name engraved on a monument to remember their life.

This service will be available to parishioners and any family in the community who would like to have their pre-born babies buried or remembered here.

In the future, the parish hopes to work with the local hospital to obtain and bury all remains of aborted and miscarried babies.

The Bishop will come to bless this new section in the cemetery, later this spring.



*Parents and families who have suffered the loss of a child are invited to come, grieve and pray in the new section of our cemetery, remembering children lost before birth.*

## ... a Reminder That Every Life Matters

Chuck hopes that Mary's Garden will be a place that mothers, fathers and families who have suffered a loss will be able to come and grieve, as well as remember and celebrate the brief life of their child. Regardless of whether or not their baby is physically buried on our cemetery grounds, it is a place for those grieving to know that they are not alone.

"If a woman has a miscarriage, she doesn't always have a place to go and grieve," Chuck says. "This is a location where she and her family can go. I hope this provides a sense of closure and a place to grieve."

Chuck anticipates that Mary's Garden will offer consolation, as well as serve as a reminder to the parish at large of the dignity and value of every human life, from the very beginnings of a person's existence.

"If you read a lot of the pro-life literature, they talk a lot about women who have had abortions and the grief that they have after having an abortion," Chuck says. "That really shows us that life is an important thing, from conception to natural death."

As we proclaim the value of life, we must also remember our responsibility to grieving mothers and fathers who suffer silently. While often unrecognized, the life of their baby matters greatly, as well.

*If you would like more information on Mary's Garden of Holy Innocents within our parish cemetery, please contact our parish office at 815-498-2010. There is no cost to have your child, lost through miscarriage, buried in this section of our cemetery. All costs will be covered by the parish.*

### *Activities and Events During Lent:*

#### **Parish Lenten Revival with the Dynamic Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers**

##### **Thursday, March 16**

7 a.m. Mass - homily

9 a.m. Talk 1 - Apologetics 101

7 p.m. Talk 2 - Meeting Jesus in the Beauty and Truth of the Catholic Faith and Vocations (This talk is for the Confirmation class students, teachers and sponsors and all high school-age children.)

##### **Friday, March 17**

7 a.m. Mass - homily

9 a.m. Talk 3 - The Pursuit of Happiness: Finding True Joy in the Catholic Faith

7:30 p.m. Talk 4 - Why Be Catholic?

#### *Lenten Liturgy Schedule:*

**Ash Wednesday**, March 1

Mass at 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.

**Adoration** every Friday during Lent, from 7:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Followed by Stations of the Cross at 7 p.m. - we will have Simple Supper from 5:30-6:30 p.m. before stations. (One Exception: March 31 Adoration ends at 5 p.m. with Stations at 5:30 p.m. - Parish Retreat begins at 6 p.m.)

**Be Reconciled** Wednesday, April 5 (Confessions available all day) - 9 a.m.-7 p.m.

#### **Penance Service**

Monday, April 10 - 7 p.m.

#### *Holy Week:*

Holy Thursday Mass - 7 p.m.

Good Friday Service - 3 p.m.

Easter Basket Blessing - 10 a.m. on Holy Saturday

Easter Vigil - 7:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday Mass at regular times - 8 and 10:30 a.m.

# St. John the Baptist

## What Is the Chrism Mass?

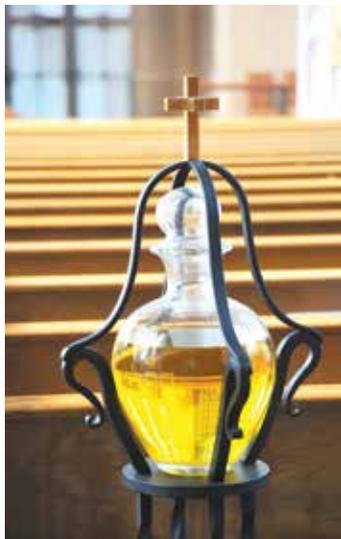
The Chrism Mass celebrated throughout the Catholic world is traditionally held on the morning of Holy Thursday, unless for pastoral reasons the local bishop or archbishop moves it to another suitable day during Holy Week.

There are basically two purposes for this annual High Mass. At the Chrism Mass, the archbishop (or bishop) blesses three oils – the oil of catechumens (*oleum catechumenorum* or *oleum sanctorum*), the oil of the infirm (*oleum infirmorum*) and holy chrism (*sacrum chrisma*) – which will be used in the administration of the sacraments throughout the diocese for the following year. In addition, archdiocesan and religious order priests renew their vows.

Anointing with oils has been a practice in the Church since Old Testament times. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says this about holy oils: “Anointing with oil has all these meanings in the sacramental life. The pre-baptismal anointing with the oil of catechumens signifies cleansing and strengthening; the anointing of the sick expresses healing and comfort. The post-baptismal anointing with sacred chrism in Confirmation and ordination is the sign of consecration. By Confirmation Christians, those who are anointed, share more completely in the mission of Jesus Christ and the fullness of the Holy Spirit with which he is filled, so that their lives may give off ‘the aroma of Christ’” (1294).

Each of us Catholics already has received some of the benefits given through these holy oils – namely, in the Sacrament of Baptism and in the conferring of the Sacrament of Confirmation. We hope to someday obtain further graces through them in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick (formerly called extreme unction). Yet, most of us know very little about these sacred oils. Moreover, few of us are able to be present when the solemn blessing of them takes place in a cathedral church.

The whole concept of “anointing” has a strong Church tradition. Throughout the Bible, various references indicate the importance of olive oil in daily life. Oil was used in cooking, particularly in the making of bread, that basic food substance for nourishment; as a



fuel for lamps; and as a healing agent in medicine. Moreover, with oil, the Jews anointed the head of a guest as a sign of welcome, beautified one’s appearance, and prepared a body for burial.

Sacred Scripture also attests to the spiritual symbolism of oil. Psalm 45:7 reads, “You love justice and hate wickedness; therefore, God your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellow kings,” signifying the special designation from God and the joy of being His servant. Moreover, to be “the anointed” of the Lord indicated receiving a special vocation from the Lord and the

empowerment with the Holy Spirit to fulfill that vocation: Jesus, echoing the words of Isaiah, spoke, “The spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore, He has anointed me” (Lk 4:18). St. Paul emphasized this point as well, “God is the one Who firmly establishes us along with you in Christ; it is He Who anointed us and has sealed us, thereby depositing the first payment, the Spirit in our hearts” (2 Cor 1:21). Therefore, the symbolism of oil is rich sanctification, healing, strengthening, beautification, dedication, consecration, and sacrifice.

At the Chrism Mass, the archbishop will bless three different oils: the oil of catechumens, for adult and infant Baptisms; the oil of the sick, for the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick; and the oil of chrism – a fragrant oil blessed only by the bishop for Baptisms, Confirmations, ordination, and the consecration of sacred spaces. After Mass, each priest receives a sufficient amount of all three oils to be used at parishes, schools, hospitals, and other places where they may be assigned and functioning.

In addition, the priests renew their vows at this Mass. The archbishop will ask the priests as a group, “Beloved sons, in remembrance of that day when Christ our Lord conferred His priesthood on His Apostles, and on us, are you resolved to renew, in the presence of your bishop and God’s holy people, the promises you once made?” To this, the priests respond in unison, “I am.”

Please consider attending the Chrism Mass as part of your Lenten journey.

## Youth Adoration

### *Inviting Our Children to Get to Know Christ in the Blessed Sacrament*

One of the core teachings of the Catholic Church is the belief in the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, Christ provides us with nourishment, both physically and spiritually, by allowing us to experience His presence, grow in grace, and be strengthened on our earthly journey. Because of the solemnity and honor that is placed on Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, it is easy to assume that this special act is reserved for adults alone – however, Jesus Christ Himself said, “Let the children come to me.” One of the ways we can most instill and nourish the faith in our young people is by inviting them to experience adoration at a young age.

“I think it’s important for children to spend time before the Blessed Sacrament, truly just for the understanding and experience of Jesus’ presence in the

Blessed Sacrament,” says our second-grade Religious Education teacher Laura Anderson.

Four times a year, our Religious Education program provides our youth the opportunity to experience adoration during class time. These times allow the students to approach the Blessed Sacrament as *children* and learn how we can pray to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament during this time.

“Whereas formal adoration is silent and quiet, our children’s adoration only has about 10 minutes set aside for silent reflection,” Laura says. “If it starts getting loud, the priest will ask a question such as ‘What is it that you want to tell Jesus right now?’ or ‘What is it that you want to share with Him’ or ‘What are your biggest concerns right now? Give those to Jesus.’ to give them guidance with how to fill their minds and hearts. They also get to sing

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*All children of the parish are welcome at the Religious Education youth adoration throughout the year.*



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## Mass Times

Saturdays 5:00 PM  
Sundays 8:00 and 10:30 AM  
Weekdays:  
Tuesdays 6:30 PM  
M, W, Th, F 7:00 AM

## Sacrament of Reconciliation

Tuesdays 5:00 PM  
Saturdays 4:00 PM  
or by appointment

## Adoration

Tuesdays 5-6 PM and  
First Fridays 7:30 AM-9:00 PM with  
Benediction 9:00 PM

# Youth Adoration *continued from page 7*

songs which are prayers to Jesus – it helps them to engage in adoration and understand what it's really about.”

Another unique aspect to this opportunity is how the priest will call them forward to kneel or sit right before the altar. By allowing them to come so close, it not only gives them a personal experience, but also helps them to understand adoration as a special time to connect with Christ.

“They feel a stronger presence of Christ when they get to sit close to the altar,” Laura says. “We dim the lights and a spot light shines on Jesus in the monstrance – the setting is something that lends to quiet time.”

All youth in the parish are invited to attend these special times of adoration whether those children are in the Religious Education program or not. Parents are also encouraged to further deepen this understanding by both talking about adoration at home as well as making short trips to the monthly adoration at the parish on first Fridays.

“If you do have the opportunity to take your child to adoration, it can help them understand the importance of it,” Laura says. “If you bring your child, it's okay to leave early – a good goal might be to go for 10 minutes, and if it is a moving 10 minutes, they understand why they are there.”



*Time spent in adoration is a way to worship Jesus Christ as well as be nourished by His presence. Teaching children this from a young age is an important lesson of faith.*

*The next youth adoration at Religious Education is April 23, from approximately 9-9:45 a.m. If you would like to learn more, or if you have any questions, please contact Laura Anderson at 815-751-8407.*