



Summer learning and fun



**at VBS
2016**

Photo by KRISTIN BECK

Vacation Bible School children donated supplies for the flood relief efforts in West Virginia.

September 2016

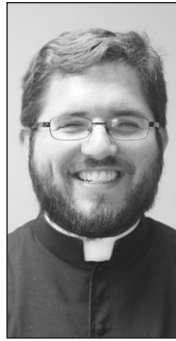
'We cannot keep to ourselves the words of eternal life'

By Fr. Jacob Straub

I hope this newsletter finds you well and that your summer has been very restful, especially for all our parents. As the children begin to go back to school, the pace picks up more and more as the temperatures (and the humidity) decrease. But this should not discourage us from our Christian vocation. May our rest prepare us for the labors of our day.

As I was considering what to write about, a question kept coming to my mind: What is the Church? We've seen in many of the Sundays since I have come to St. John how Jesus Christ desires us to act in faith. But how do we bring forth this faith? Is this done alone or together? Is it done in a cookie-cutter way or are there as many paths as there are people? What does this all mean?

This is part of the reason why Jesus established the Church in His time here on earth and why it is still operating in His name and by His authority 2000 years later. Christ, knowing



Fr. Jacob Straub

our human nature, knows that we seek unity; we do not truly desire to be alone forever, but we wish to have companions for the journey. We also need guidance and instruction so as to aid our life with Christ. Yet all of this is only looking inwardly at what the Church is; what does she do add extra, to the outside world?

Pope Benedict XVI summarized it best in his apostolic exhortation *Verbum Domini*: the Church's mission is to proclaim the Word of God to the world, that Word which is Jesus Christ, through whom all things have been saved.

"We cannot keep to ourselves the words of eternal life given to us in our encounter with Jesus Christ: they are meant

for everyone, for every man and woman. Everyone today, whether he or she knows it or not, needs this message."

If anything, this need grows exponentially each day, with new attacks from radical Islam, with the growing loss of our cultural heritage and the slow spiral of society towards secularism and atheism.

The Church does not exist merely for her members but for all of humanity. The Church's message is not meant only for those within her walls but is the sole truth that animates this world. No other word can bring souls to the truth and lead them to salvation beyond what the Church preaches and proclaims. If we are not convinced of this, then we need to rethink when Jesus tells us, "I am the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:6). Our Lord does not give us a multitude of paths to choose but identifies Himself as the one path to salvation.

Is this awkward? Yes it is, in a society that tries to teach our

children that anything goes, that you can literally be whatever you feel you are, that the only thing that is not tolerated is intolerance. It is awkward to stand up and to declare that all of this is wrong and that there is one truth by which we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28). But it must have been a little awkward for the child to tell the emperor that he was naked instead of wearing invisible clothes. Only the truth can set us free from the frivolities of our sin-plagued world, the truth that is Jesus.

My hope in the next few months is to work on improving our liturgy so as to help us be spiritually nourished by our Mass attendance, along with looking at the possibility of classes to aid in our understanding of our Catholic faith. If we are going to proclaim the truth, we need to know it and begin to let it impact our lives every day. Let us seek the help of the Virgin Mary and our patron Saint John to be the Church God wants us to be.

Volunteers needed for St. Vincent DePaul Society

By Mike Gardner

More than 30 years ago, the food pantry was started at St. John's church. Soon after, many of the churches in town were donating to do. About two years ago, it became the Food Pantry of Carroll County. Factories, churches, local organizations, businesses and individual donors have kept us stocked. The food bank also distributes govern-

ment commodities.

For St. John parish to continue with this work, the St. Vincent DePaul Society needs volunteers. Our team mans the pantry the first Friday of the month, the fifth Wednesday and the fifth Friday of the from from 3-5 p.m. It takes about four volunteers to work each day.

If our church could get more help, it would take the load off of

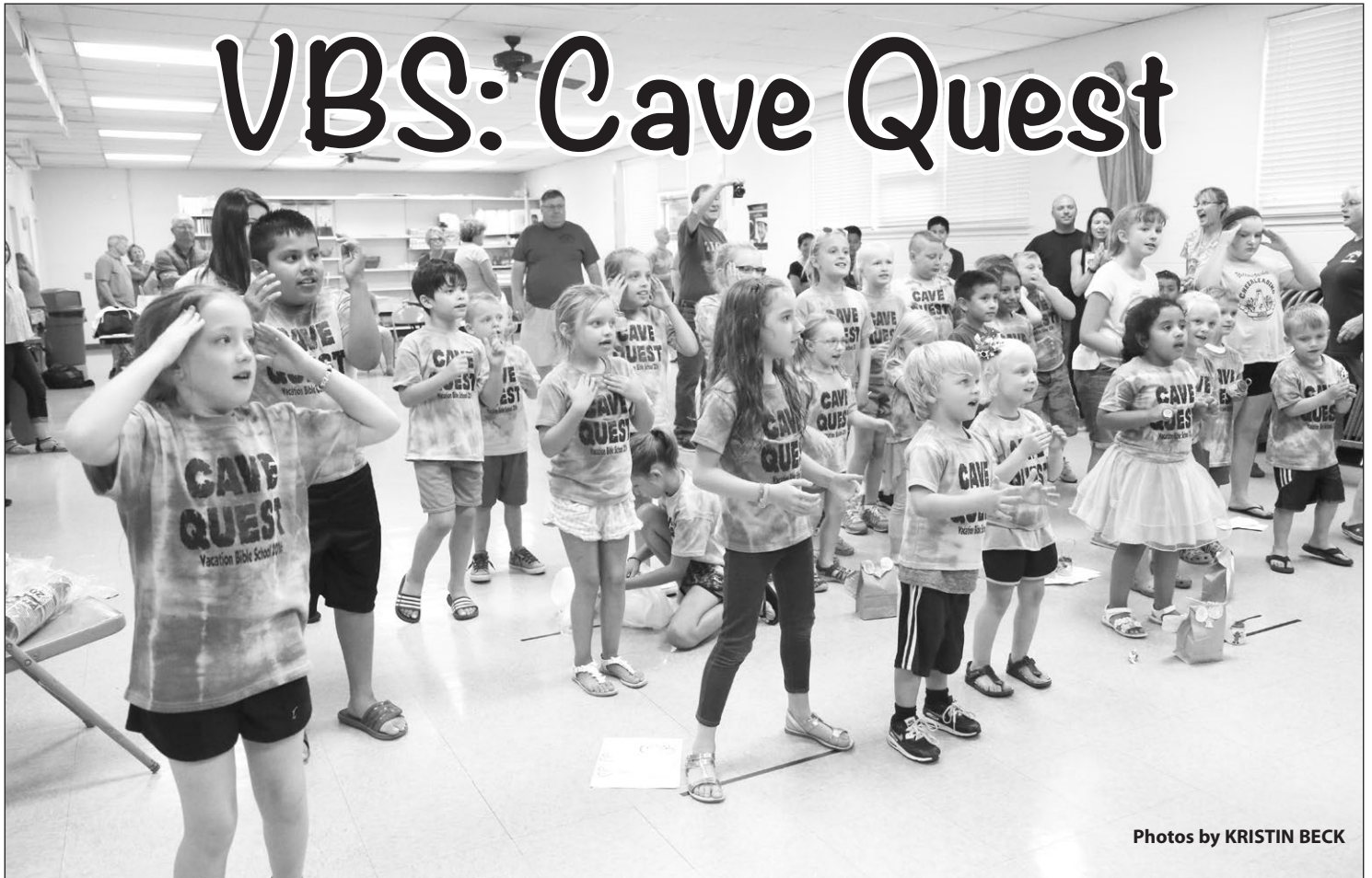
the five volunteers that work the pantry now. On other days the food pantry is open during the month, it is staffed by volunteers from one business and 11 other churches in the community.

Sr. Paula always said, 'Many hands make light work.'

Last year during the week before Christmas, various churches and organizations were responsible for distributing

about 20 tons of food to your friends, neighbors, and parishioners in this county! One factory in our community raised \$11,000 for the food pantry this year, and it was one of our parishioners that organized it!

Remember, 'Many hands make light work. Jesus shared his time, talent and treasure for us. Please be generous, and thank you in advance.





Thank you to all of our volunteers!





Our Mothers, The Personification of Divine Mercy

By Deacon Mike Keller

When we pray the rosary we say the words at the end, “Hail Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, Our life, our sweetness, and our hope ...”

Mary is the mother of Jesus, the dispenser of Divine Mercy. Mary is the model of motherhood to us, so in this Year of Mercy let’s reflect on our mothers as the personification of God’s mercy to us through the Corporal Works of Mercy.

Feed the hungry: We start with, Feed the hungry: From our earliest days and in fact before we’re even born, our mothers feed us. When we were infants she woke up many times in the middle of the night to feed us. She planned and prepared meals on a tight budget. How many meals have our mothers prepared for us? Say we leave home at 18. If we count only an average of two meals each day, allowing for our teen years when we eat at McDonalds a lot, that comes out to about 13,000 meals. Feed the hungry, yeah she fed us when we were hungry.

Give drink to the thirsty: I think of the many gallons of Kool Aid we drank as kids. Remember Kool Aid?

Our Moms always had something for us to drink. If not Kool Aid then it was milk, juice, soda or something else, almost always cool and refreshing. Give drink to the thirsty, yeah she did, even in the middle of the night when we woke up thirsty.

Clothe the naked: Who taught us to dress ourselves? Who changed our diapers? Who bought us every article of clothing we wore until we started buying our own clothes? Who bought our shirts, pants, t-shirts and underwear, socks, shoes, coats, hats, gloves, and on and on? And then did all our laundry? Mom, right?

Shelter the homeless: Who provided a home for us? Not just a roof over our heads, but a home. A safe place to come when we came in from the cold and rain. A welcoming place when it seemed the whole world hated us? Mom!

Visit the sick. Big one. Who did we run to when we had the flu or a cold or a belly ache? Did your mom rub your chest with Vapo Rub when you had a cold? Who held us on her lap when we didn’t feel good, placed a cool cloth on our foreheads when we had a fever? Who took us to the

doctor if we were really sick and sat up with us all night? And who didn’t take time off when she was sick herself?

Visit the imprisoned: Who visited us and encouraged us when we imprisoned by self-doubt or when we failed a test? When we were lonely or afraid? It was Mom.

Bury the Dead: Who did we run to for consolation when we had a little disagreement with someone we thought was a friend? Who helped us bury dead relationships and friendships? Especially friendships that were leading us down the wrong road, even when we couldn’t see it? Mom did.

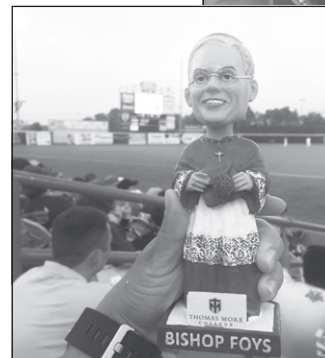
Mary, mother of Jesus, our spiritual mother and our earthly mothers, extend Divine Mercy to us and show us how to extend it to each other. They teach us generosity, a forgiving heart, patience, politeness, self-control and to give thanks, to put the needs of others before our wants. They show us sacrificial love.

So as we continue this year of Mercy let us thank our mothers for all they have done for us. And let us ask God to bless them.



Good times at VBS!

Fellowship and baseball at the Florence Freedom



Photos by KRISTIN BECK

The Bishop Foy's Bobblehead doll!

The Evangelist

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**Volume 2 Issue 2 •
September 2016**

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Upcoming events

- **Sept. 7:** St John's youth group will start meeting again from 6-8 p.m. in the Education Building. All middle school and high school students are welcome and may bring a friend. Meetings are held every Wednesday through the end of May.
- **Sept. 22:** Popcorn & Movie Night at 6:30 p.m. in the parish hall, featuring "The Letters, the Untold Story of Mother Teresa." Based on the true story of Mother Teresa, played by Juliet Stevenson, the movie explores the life's work of the Nobel Peace Prize recipient and one of the greatest humanitarians of all time. This movie is especially timed to reflect Pope Francis' canonization of Mother Teresa on Sept. 4.
- There will be a Donut Sunday event held in September. Look in the bulletin and on the Facebook group page, St. John/Transfiguration Community Life, for more information.

