

NOTRE DAME PARISH

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"My Father gives you the true bread from heaven."



In these uncertain times, many people find comfort in a world view that divides people into opposing camps. Us vs. them. Conservative vs. liberal. Those on the right concern themselves with preserving timeless, almost eternal values to enrich life today. Those on the left desire to liberate the oppressed from the prejudices of the past and give them their just due. So, the political and cultural fault lines are drawn. The past is a sure guidepost to the present. The present is the

moment to free us and ensure a glorious future. This might be a crass way to see the world. But, it makes for interesting politics and boosts ratings for cable news networks.

Once in a while, dwelling in the past does fog our openness to what confronts us. Spirituality is more than cherishing tradition. This was the message Jesus gave to his audience: "Don't merely look to the past for answers. Look to me!"

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, July 21 @ 4PM

Gloria Godfrey

Sunday, August 1 @ 9:30AM

Jakesi & Peo Families

Monday, August 2 @ 8AM

John Benish, Sr.

Tuesday, August 3 @ 8AM

Nolan Bingham

Wednesday, August 4 @ 8AM

Deacon Vic Janowski

Thursday, August 5 @ 8AM

Notre Dame Parish Homebound

Friday, August 6 @ 8AM

Tom McDonald

Saturday, August 7 @ 8AM

Joan & Mike King

10AM Olinger/Bobillo Wedding
4PM

Mary Lou Linnen

Let Us Pray

- For progress in vaccinations against COVID
- For the protection of administrators, teachers, and especially K-12 children as schools reopen
- For the safety of travelers
- For victims of wildfires, flooding, and other disasters
- For an end to hateful acts against minorities, especially Asian-Americans and many Asian nuns studying and working in the USA
- For a deeper appreciation of the Mass as a seamless act of worship and praise
- For those who hunger for earthly bread
- For freedom from narrow thinking that opposes our having the mind of Christ

When Planning Falls Apart

I once had a religious superior who assigned me to schedule parochial assistance for summer months. (Some pastors use summer months to vacation, attend conferences or summer school, and other activities harder to do at other times of the year.) The priests of the monastery were seen as a pool that could fill in for absent pastors for a weekend, a week, or more.

As early as January requests would come in from pastors. I would record the parish and dates needed. Then I would go to the superior to see which priests would be available, and which ones he had other intentions for during the summer.

Making a list, I began to call or survey the priest-monks that were approved for service,

asking when they were available and what dates fit their schedules. Sometimes, I even had to make sure the temperament of the priest was compatible with the character of a given parish.

By May, the schedule and assignments were pretty much in place – for me.

But then my superior began without warning to pull some of the priests from my list for needs or assignments he had suddenly determined. The pool of available priests began to diminish. The schedule began to fall apart. And I had made commitments to the pastors of these parishes months ago.

It was frustrating, but that's life.

The COVID pandemic likewise has made planning for parish, school, and community



activities a moving target. While many folks are acting as if it is over, science shows it is not over. CDC recommendations shift because science must constantly incorporate new data. We must recognize there is great pressure for it to be over. But we can't let our guards down. The loss of over 600,000 American lives shows it is not a hoax. Man proposes, Nature disposes.

Father Keith & Rocco

Daily Miracles: "God, I Want a House!"

By John O'Neill



"God, I want a house!!!" It was the end of a long week.

Working for two Habitat for Humanity affiliates meant that I was working around 60 hours a week for the Ecumenical Christian Housing organization. I was helping others build and buy homes, yet my family and I were on food stamps and renting. I vented skyward and promptly forgot about it.

God listens to every prayer and this cry would become a daily miracle, a miracle that began long before my complaint was even uttered.

Some ten years earlier, I had volunteered at the Catholic Worker in New York, where I met Dorothy Day. While speaking to her, I casually said, "I grew up in Detroit – but in a good neighbourhood."

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Nuns receive polio vaccination in Archdiocese of New York, c. 1945, under the watchful eye of Cardinal Spellman.



A Catholic Take on Vaccinations

By Elaine Krebs

I remember calling my grandmother in May of 2020 to tell her I wouldn't be coming home for the summer as I usually do. COVID-19 was still rampant throughout the country and flying across the country on an airplane, potentially exposing myself and my grandmother to the virus, was too much of a risk. She understood but was of course still saddened by the reality. "Well, Elaine," she told me, "I'll just keep praying for the vaccines, so I can see you again soon." Fast forward to a year later - my grandmother and I have both been vaccinated, and the Summer 2021 visit is on.

Deciding to get vaccinated was an easy decision for me, not only because I want to visit my grandmother and other relatives, but because I believe it is the right thing to do in accordance with my Catholic faith. However, as vaccines have become more prevalent, I have learned that some fellow Catholic friends are not as eager to be vaccinated. In my conversations with these people, three themes of Catholic Social Teaching – a set of

seven principles that help Catholics apply our faith to our everyday lives – have been most prevalent. Ever since I was first introduced to these tenets in high school, I have turned to them to help me navigate decisions such as how to vote, what career to choose, and where to donate money. There are many resources dedicated to explaining the science of vaccines and secular motivations for vaccinations, but very few address religious motivations and concerns. In this piece, I would like to lay out three of the themes of Catholic Social Teaching as they apply to vaccinations, as well as address one major concern for Catholics.

To get vaccinated is to be pro-life. As Catholics, we are called by Catholic Social Teaching to be "pro-life" - this means ensuring the dignity and right to life of every human person - from conception until natural death of old age. Over the past year, millions of people around the world have

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unnaturally died due to COVID-19. Young, healthy people, and even children, have died from the virus – people who otherwise should be here today. The vaccines are proven to reduce our own risk of contracting (and therefore dying of) COVID-19, and they have also been proven to reduce our risk of spreading COVID to other individuals. Therefore, by receiving the vaccine, I am not only protecting my own life, but the lives of others around me. We, as pro-life believers, are willing to march in the streets and pray outside of clinics to potentially save lives from abortion. We must also be willing to receive the vaccine to potentially save a life - including our own - from COVID-19.

To get vaccinated is to help the poor and vulnerable. Those most affected by the pandemic have been the poor and vulnerable of our population, such as elderly people and those with disabilities. Due to their weakened immune systems, the elderly and disabled are more likely to have a severe case of COVID-19 and die from the virus. Nursing homes, convents, and care centers for our elderly brothers and sisters have been the center of many outbreaks and lost lives. Hospitals have been overwhelmed with COVID cases, and therefore less able to care for those who need regular treatment. The poor have also been disproportionately affected due to lack of health care, lack of virtual access, and job loss. By getting vaccinated, we are taking

action to end the pandemic and, in turn, end the disadvantages that the poor and vulnerable have had during this time.

To get vaccinated is to heal the Body of Christ. Our Catholic faith is not meant to be practiced virtually. Christ no longer has a physical body on Earth, so we are called to be His hands and feet. As the virus rages through our global Body, we are not able to be physically present to each other. By receiving the vaccine, we are ensuring that one more person will remain healthy and not spread the virus to our brothers and sisters. By getting vaccinated, we are one step closer to being able to attend indoor services, to hold hands with each other during prayer, to minister face-to-face to those who need it most, and to live fully as part of the community to which we are called.

And now the concern: “But, Elaine! The vaccines are tied to abortions!” Yes, all of the COVID vaccines currently on the market either were tested (Pfizer and Moderna) or developed (Janssen and AstraZeneca) using embryonic stem cells from an aborted fetus. This process is not new, as many other vaccines were created from the same or similar cell lines, such as the vaccines for polio, rabies, hepatitis-A, shingles, measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR), and varicella/chicken pox (Variax). However, there are a few other details we need to be aware of. First, the aborted

tissue in question is from 1985, and the embryonic stem cells used are derived from a cell line hundreds of generations removed from the original fetus. Secondly, no aborted cells or tissue are in the vaccine. The Catholic Church has designated this as a “remote” connection, and therefore it does not make us complicit in the abortion.

Even though the vaccines have ties to abortion, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), as well as Pope Francis himself, have clearly iterated that we are “morally obligated” to receive the COVID-19 vaccine due to its ability to protect life in the here and now. Since we don’t have effective and ethical alternatives, the USCCB has made it clear that we have a duty “to protect ourselves, and to pursue the common good” despite the fact many vaccines (COVID and otherwise) are created using unethical cell lines.

For me, the guarantee of the vaccine to protect life outweighed the cons: ties to abortion, side effects, and the minute potential for risks such as blood clots. I trusted my own instinct, and the wisdom of our church’s leaders, and received my vaccine without qualms.

Elaine Krebs is a science educator and Catholic Confirmation coordinator in Los Angeles, CA. She is member of the IFYC (Interfaith Youth Core) Alumni Vaccine Network, as well as a 2021 IFYC Interfaith Innovation Fellow.

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Dorothy snapped, "What's a good neighbourhood?"

I was jolted out of my middle class mindset. The faceless homeless were to become people I knew and worked with daily.

Five years later, I was married and living in northern Michigan. I saw a picture in the diocesan newspaper depicting Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter working on a Habitat building in NYC. Volunteers were needed. I thought, "What better place to lend a hammer than our old neighbourhood?"

Habitat was miraculous. After three days of volunteering, I was hooked. I encountered a group that was helping dozens of families to build their own permanent homes, providing a tangible solution for those in need and rebuilding neighbourhoods with their own hands! I felt this was where God was calling me.

"This is wonderful, I want to do this for the rest of my life! How can I get a job with you?" I asked.

Habitat was still in its infancy, and I was told, "We don't hire people, but if you can find a church or someone to pay you, we'll let you work for us."

After raising enough funds through family and friends, I quit my old job and began toiling for Habitat.

I loved my job, but soon I found myself working 60-hour weeks: driving in the dark, working out of make-shift offices, and sleeping on couches while on the road. The toughest part was that in my own home, we were really struggling. While my old job had included housing, now we had a young daughter, and I was earning less and paying rent. We were on food stamps and couldn't even afford a Christmas tree that year.

To add salt to the wound, I was working all day to facilitate house building, seeing God provide homeownership for these families, and my little family was living in a rental.

I complained to high Heaven, angry, bitter, and exhausted. I felt like Jeremiah: "You duped me Lord, you duped me!"

I pleaded, "God, I want a house!!!"

Barely a month later, our landlady announced, "We've decided to sell the house. You had asked for first right of refusal, so we're offering it to you."

I immediately panicked. "I can't afford a house!"

I thought we'd have to move again.

Oh me of little faith! She offered us a land contract with payments equaling our rent minus taxes and insurance. That seemed good. But then she said, "And we'll need a \$5,000 down payment."

"I can't afford a down payment!"

But the Lord made a path where there was no path, and we soon had the money we needed. I'd forgotten that God listens to every prayer.

So before we knew it, we'd bought a two-bedroom house with outbuildings for \$264 dollars a month. Even back then that was miraculous! Our landlady almost certainly could have gotten more money for the house if she'd sold it on the open market. She and her husband did a great kindness and allowed themselves to be channels of grace. God seldom works miracles unassisted; he delights in working with us.

Every day for three decades, our house has been a source of providence for our family. And we've also used the house to give back to others. Over the years, we've taken in people who needed refuge. It's not only been a home for ourselves but also a home for others.

On reflection, our miracle house was not for us alone but to make us mindful that others need miracles, to awaken the awareness that God blesses our work and that we can rely upon the Lord's promises in addressing the needs of others.

Providence is neither a theological theory nor an individual spiritual gift but a reality that builds the body of Christ. When I understand that I receive all from God, then I can be an agent of providence and share that miracle.

John O'Neill works for Habitat for Humanity in Lake Country and Traverse City, Michigan. He has worked for affordable housing groups for nearly 20 years. He's written for The Catholic Worker, Michigan Catholic, So Weekly News, Catholic Digest, Traverse City Records Eagle, and Dunes Review.



Invite you to...



Come and enjoy Good Food and Fellowship!

Sunday, August 1, 2021

8 a.m. - 1p.m.

QAS Cafeteria

Donations accepted, -not required...



CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL

Goal: \$37,796

Y-T-D: \$20,590

THE NATIVITY PROJECT



FUNDS COLLECTED TO DATE
\$11,298