

# SACRED HEART HEARTBEAT

ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH



**6<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME February 16/17, 2019**

## **COMING SPECIAL EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS**

February 16/17 – Renewal of Marriage Vows at both weekend Masses

**February 16 – Reception after Mass in the Church Hall**

Feb. 18 – Ask Father John – 7 PM (*See note on Page2*)

Feb/ 22 – Feast of the Chair of Peter

March 1 - First Friday – Adoration following the 8:30 AM Mass

March 4 – Novena of Grace to St. Francis Xavier begins

March 9/10 – **SECOND SUNDAY COLLECTION**

March 9 – Children’s Mass at Sweifieh

March 12 – Canonization of St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis Xavier

March 13 – **ASH WEDNESDAY** – Mass at the Jesuit Center at 8:30 AM and 6 PM

Imposition of ashes AFTER each Mass

March 17 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent; Feast of St. Patrick

March 19 – Feast of St. Joseph

March 21 – Mother’s Day in Jordan

March 23 – First Confessions at 3:30 PM at St. Mary of Nazareth

March 23/24 – Anointing of the Sick at Both Masses

March 25 – Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

March 29 – Daylight Savings time begins

April 5 - First Friday – Adoration following the 8:30 AM Mass

April 13/14 - **SECOND SUNDAY COLLECTION**

April 21 – Palm Sunday (In Jordan we follow the Orthodox calendar)

April 23 – Memorial of St. George

April 25 – HOLY THURSDAY

April 26 – GOOD FRIDAY

April 27 – HOLY SATURDAY – EASTER VIGIL

April 28 – EASTER SUNDAY Morning Mass at 10 AM at the Jesuit Center

## **A REFLECTION ON THE FEAST JUST PASSED**

A good friend of mine was talking about Valentine’s Day in an e-mail and she said - and I quote -

“You see my dear Jesuit... when one sends a Valentine greeting to another... part of what they do is they do it for themselves... it is the one day when we are allowed to say what is in our heart and soul... and we say we love people - not necessarily romantic and sexual love, but the love of one human being toward another... it is the love that Jesus told us is God's greatest commandment - the love that He told us to share ... and so I share mine with you on this day of love... you must now take what I have sent your way and go out and share it with another - one who has no idea what Valentine's day is all about... but one who could use a smile or a touch or a random act of kindness.” And so – although a little late – Happy Valentine’s Day. I love you.



*Pope Francis'*  
MONTHLY  
PRAYER  
INTENTIONS

For a generous welcome of the victims of human trafficking, of enforced prostitution, and of violence.

THE LINK TO THE VIDEO FOR THIS MONTH'S INTENTION:

[https://youtu.be/rs07jQFJ7S0?fbclid=IwAR2jJV6rJoa2z0dxqcMHRzYUOjbn\\_TLumnicJbTr\\_r c6XE7x3q5BfCH79Tc](https://youtu.be/rs07jQFJ7S0?fbclid=IwAR2jJV6rJoa2z0dxqcMHRzYUOjbn_TLumnicJbTr_r c6XE7x3q5BfCH79Tc)

**RENEWAL OF MARRIAGE VOWS**

It has been said of both religious vows and marriage vows that you take them once, and you renew them in your life every single day. It is good every now and then to stop, and remember the day when you took those vows, and perhaps, in celebration, to renew them. It is an act of deep symbolism – and if you do NOT renew them, you are still married. They are eternal.

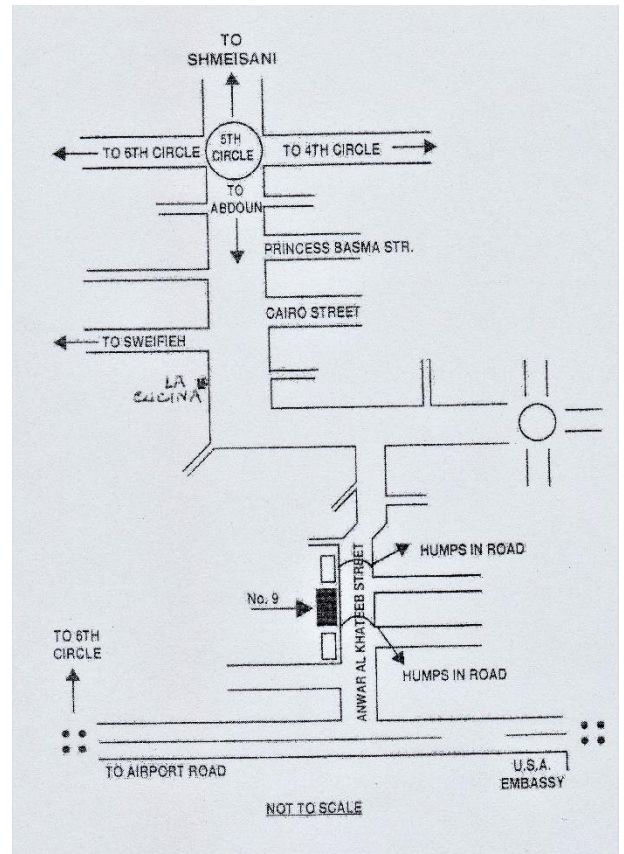
So at both Masses this weekend (February 16/17), any couple who wishes to come forward and renew their vows will be invited to do so. If you want to bring witnesses, as you had on your wedding day, that's fine. And if you want rings blessed, that can be part of the renewal. I assume your rings were blessed, and that doesn't "wear out" or have a time stamp. But as part of the commitment, rings can be blessed as well.

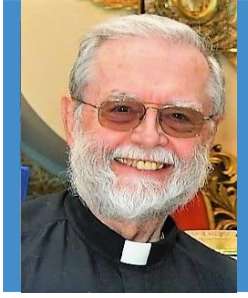
There is no need to register – just come to the front of the Church when the priest invites you.

**ASK FATHER JOHN**

On Monday, February 18, at 7 PM, we will have the first "Ask Father John" for 2019. As is the norm, no question is out of bounds. You may have theological questions, liturgical questions, something about the End of year Report you want clarified, something in the news – even if you don't have a question yourself, the questions of others may prove stimulating. Our hosts for the evening are Vivian and Paul David, at 9 Anwar Al Khatib Street, Sweifieh. Their apartment is on the top floor. In case you get lost - - 079 588-9330. Map on the right. Please RSVP but if you are suddenly free at the last minute, please come ahead.

If you have never attended one of these, it is an informal gathering where any question is permitted. Topics can be topical, historical, personal, theological, philosophical or just things that you have always wondered about. If Fr. John doesn't know the answer, someone else present might. If no one knows – Fr. John promises he will look it up and find the answer. Great fun, a chance to meet people you've known by sight from Mass and sometimes even educational. Please join us. If you have a chance to call and let us know you're coming, great. But if you don't – please feel free to come anyway, and it will be a delightful surprise!





# RAMBLINGS

## OF THE REVEREND REDACTOR

The great British author C.S. Lewis once said that “Prayer is like dancing. As long as you have to pay attention to what your feet are doing, you’re not dancing.” Of course, the same thing is true of prayer – as long as you are reading someone else’s word, you’re not yet connecting with God in a meaningful way.

Ritual is important in our lives. As a child of the pre-Vatican II Church, I remember how comforting it was to be able to go into any church anywhere in the world and find the Mass exactly the same. The language was always Latin, the prayers and movements and actions were the same in all countries, and it spoke to the universality of the Church. People followed in prayer books (unless their Latin was really good) but you always felt at home.

Some people felt alienated – removed from the action – and so one of the reforms of the Second Vatican Council was to permit the Mass to be celebrated in the local language, and to have the priest face the people, rather than praying with his back to them. In the Tridentine Mass, the image was the priest leading the people in prayer, and the altar was re-enacting the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. After Vatican II, the priest faced the people and invited them to the table, reminiscent of the Last Supper. It is, of course, the same miracle of the Body and Blood of Christ, but it gave the faithful a new way of associating with it. The hope was that it would provide a more intimate feeling, and a deeper association with what is taking place.

Not everyone liked the changes, but when has there ever been a change that everyone liked. The new format prompted great renovations and writing and experimentation. Sometimes things went a little overboard, but as the old saying goes, “You never know how far you can go until you have gone too far.”

But whether we are talking of prayer or the Mass or the celebrations of great holidays, ritual is important. The repeated actions over time give us security, a sense of being connected both to the past and to one another. Dancing without thinking about your feet is a wonderful sensation, and opens the door to all sorts of other ways to relationships. Praying without thinking about praying makes it possible for a more intimate connection with God, which is, or certainly should be, the goal of prayer. The lessons I had to memorize as a child I can still recite, and while today I may have a deeper understanding or a richer vision of what those words mean, they are still the hook on which I hang what I have learned and experienced since those younger days.

I once worked as staff for a project where one of the Board members would regularly remind us that we shouldn’t “re-invent the wheel.” She wanted to be sure we were not wasting time with problems that had already been solved, looking for solutions that someone else had already perfected. The same is true in our spiritual life. Let us learn from those who have gone before, make use of the rituals and practices they have left us, and with them, open ourselves to God so that He can finish the process of growing closer.

And as we pray - let us continue to pray for one another.

Fr. John’s Email: [pastorsh@jordanjesuits.org](mailto:pastorsh@jordanjesuits.org)      **Website:** [Jordanjesuits.org](http://Jordanjesuits.org)

Fr. John’s    Mobile: 079 013-8985 (If no answer, leave a message.)

Facebook: Parish Group. (You have to ask to be admitted, but you will be.)



## THE FEAST OF THE CHAIR OF PETER – FEBRUARY 22

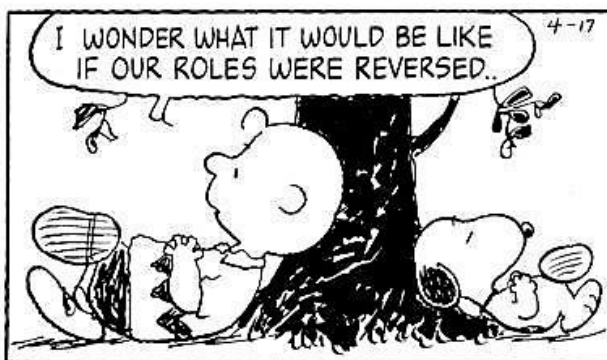
Usually we celebrate the saint of the week, if there is one. And the feast for this date is about a saint, the first Pope of the Church, the leaders of the Apostles, St. Peter. But the name of the feast can be confusing – it seems to focus on a piece of furniture. Of course, we realize that the real meaning is his authority as the leader of the Church, of which the chair is merely a symbol. But symbols, like ritual (as I suggest elsewhere) are important, and it is important to know where this feast and that symbol come from.

First of all, there IS a physical chair. It is housed in the Vatican, in St. Peter's Basilica and it is one of the earliest relics of the church. The wooden throne encased in bronze by Bernini was given to Pope John VIII by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles the Bald in 875. Bernini, one of the great artists of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, created the bronze that surrounds the throne. The Chair of Saint Peter sits behind the main altar of Saint Peter's Basilica, (at the entrance to the grave of Saint Peter), as a reminder to all successors of their moral responsibility to preserve the Deposit of Faith.

When giving Saint Peter the keys to heaven, Jesus declared that He would abide by whatever Peter and the apostles deemed as sinful or proper. With this declaration, Christ instituted the sacrament of Reconciliation (also known as Penance or Confession). Therefore, it became Peter and the apostle's responsibility to teach moral truths to the faithful and to forgive sins. It also became their responsibility to appoint successors to carry on this work.

In these two very powerful sentences from Matthew's Gospel, Christ graced us with a means to transmit the faith and become reconciled to God and the Church. It is through this Chair of Saint Peter, and the Church, that Christ paves the road to salvation for each of us. Through one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, through receipt of the sacraments, we unite ourselves to Christ. Joined together as members of one Church, we confidently affirm that *"the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it"* (Matt 16:19).

As Pope emeritus Benedict XVI said in 2012, the Chair is "a symbol of the special mission of Peter and his Successors to tend Christ's flock, keeping it united in faith and in charity."



When I saw this, my first thought was that it applied just as well to our relationship with God. Too many people tend to think of God as a "fixer," someone who will solve their problems, or a vending machine – put in a certain number of prayers, pull the lever and your request will be granted.

Of course that's silly, and at some level we know it's silly. But at the same time, I suspect many of us could catch ourselves thinking along lines something like these.

Think of God as your dog. And ask yourself if you give the same degree of care for, or pay as much attention to God as you do your pet.

