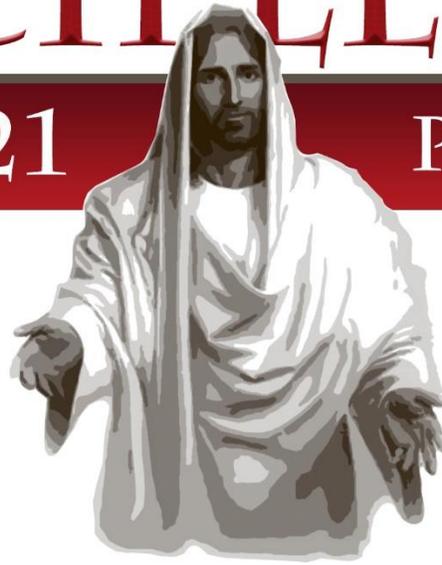


# DISCIPLESHIP

2021

PNCC



## DISCIPLESHIP: 2021

### WE WILL TRUST IN YOU

#### PNCC FUTURE DIRECTION - ACTION PLAN FOR PNCC PARISHES BASED ON THE EFFORTS OF THE 24<sup>TH</sup> & 25<sup>TH</sup> PNCC GENERAL SYNODS

Continue to develop and emphasize Discipleship through 2021: *Our purpose is to strengthen all members of the Church in their following of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This will give us a better sense of ourselves as the Church. During 2021 as we prepare for a post Covid world, reengage and recommit ourselves as the Body of Christ; we will examine the lives of some of the prophets, disciples of our Lord, saints, bishops and their discipleship virtues to see what we can learn from them to apply in our daily living.* Please see the monthly Future Direction messages regarding this effort with reflections for living this out daily.

#### **JANUARY – DANIEL IN THE LION’S DEN**

Scripture: Daniel Chapter 6

Reflection and Action Item: Daniel was raised to high office by King Darius. His jealous rivals trick the King to decree that no prayers should be addressed to anyone but the King. Daniel continued to be steadfast in his prayer to God. Thus, he was thrown into the lion’s den and as we know God protected and saved him because of his great faith. As Daniel said “My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight.” (6:22)

This story teaches us that no one or nothing is a match for the True God and that God provides for those who are faithful and devoted to Him. So even in the midst of difficult and challenging times such as this ongoing pandemic – let us continue to put our faith and trust in God.

Be steadfast in your **daily** prayer and encourage others to put their faith and trust in God, Who will guide us through this storm. Do not lose heart but be strong in your faith and encourage others to do the same.

**Attend** PNCC church wide Discipleship Retreat on Wednesday January 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm

## **FEBRUARY – JEREMIAH**

Scripture: Jeremiah 1:10-10; 12:1-6; 20:7-18

Reflection and Action Item: Perhaps more than any of the other Old Testament prophets, Jeremiah's story reveals both the inner struggles and external persecutions that come with being a faithful instrument of God's will. Yet, his journey only foreshadows the reality of the Cross as embraced by our Lord Jesus for our salvation and given to us as the daily means of our own discipleship (Luke 9:23).

We can all feel like Jeremiah sometimes, but as members of the Church, we are called to help one another remain faithful when times are difficult. Sometime this month, prayerfully review the attached list of the *Spiritual Works of Mercy* and find 2 ways that you can apply them to help lighten the load carried by a fellow disciple of Jesus.

## **MARCH – BISHOP FRANCIS HODUR**

Scripture: Wisdom 5:1-5; 1 Timothy 4:1-5; John 15:1-7

Reflection and Action Item: Bishop Francis Hodur was called by God and his people to organize our Polish National Catholic Church. This began on the second Sunday of March in 1897. Bishop Hodur said: "Our Church cannot be a blind, soulless copy of any Christian church. It must reach to the source of religious life, Christ the Lord. If we do not have Jesus' principles more adapted to life and effectively active, we do not have the right to life. Therefore, to work!"

Almighty and merciful God, You called a humble priest, Father Francis Hodur, to be Your servant and to awaken Your people for work in Your vineyard. Grant that, as we remember Your call to us this month, our faith may be made firm and our hearts may be enkindled by the fire of sacrificial love.

Find two ways in which you can make Christ's principles and teachings more effective and evident in your life as we remember our First Bishop and how he followed and served Jesus.

**Schedule** Mass for Healing

**Schedule and conduct** Lenten Retreat (*in person or on Zoom*)

## **APRIL – MOTHER THERESA**

Scripture: Matthew 25:

Reflection and Action Item: Mother Theresa lived her life challenging and inviting others to do something beautiful for God. There is so much going on in our lives that takes us in so many directions many times focusing on things that matter the least, but the example of Mother Theresa's life and efforts call us not to lose sight of what matters the most. She lived performing small acts of kindness with great love for all people – especially the poor and marginalized. Her lifestyle has made her one of the most beloved women in history and an icon of goodness. In following her great example living each day doing acts of kindness with love we can become more faithful disciples of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Perform at least three acts of kindness to help people who are homeless or support a cause that will support them. This can be done with either your time, talent or treasure. Let this help us to see Jesus in those who are less fortunate than we.

## **MAY – BISHOP PADEWSKI: PNCC MARTYR**

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:12-19; Luke 9:23-26

Reflection and Action Item:

Bishop Joseph Padewski was made bishop in 1935. His efforts not only rebuilt the PNCC diocese of Poland, but fostered its growth. This growth was abruptly halted with the Nazi invasion of Poland, which began World War Two. During this period the missionary diocese in Poland once again saw the destruction of its churches and the imprisonment, torture and murder of its clergy. Fully three-fourths of the diocese was destroyed. Padewski was himself imprisoned and tortured. He was later released as an American prisoner

of war, for a German general officer. He was sent back to America where he once again assumed the role of a parish pastor.

Following World War Two, Bishop Padewski returned to Poland and worked to rebuild our diocese in Poland. He gained the church a legal status in 1946. A little while later, in the midst of his efforts, the communist government made a general persecution of the Christian Church. Bishop Padewski was taken by the authorities, imprisoned, tortured and ultimately murdered. The oral account of his death was given church authorities by a cleaning woman who witnessed the torture Bishop Padewski endured. He died on May 10, 1951. At the age of 57, he became the first bishop-martyr of the Polish National Catholic Church. He was buried in Warsaw, Poland.

Almighty God, this month we remember the life of the first martyred bishop of the Polish National Catholic Church, Joseph Padewski. He dedicated himself to the building up and restoring of our Catholic Church for the people of Poland. May the example of his life and death inspire us to share the same message to people of all nations, proclaiming Your Gospel and so extending Your kingdom here on earth.

Offer a Prayer for Bishop Padewski and all Martyrs who have given their life for the faith. Support a person who is being persecuted for living out their faith either with your time, talent or treasure.

**Schedule** Zoom video conference: Soup, Sandwich & Sermon or Wine and Cheese Gathering – Adult Education

### **JUNE – RUTH AND NAOMI**

**Scripture:** As a family, read together the short but profoundly beautiful Book of Ruth. It's only 4 chapters but is very rich. You could read it all in one sitting or divide it up as you like.

**Reflection and Action Item:** The story of Ruth and Naomi speaks to our hearts of the great dignity of family life and the call to be faithful to one another, come what may. This month reach out to a member of your own family with whom you have been out of touch for a while. Make that call you've been putting off for some reason or send a card with a note to catch them up on family happenings. This is a great chance for all of us to emulate the faithfulness of Ruth and Naomi!

**Remember** Clergy Appreciation Weekend & Sacred Vocations Month, pray that the Lord Jesus will send more priests and deacons to his Church, and be sure to show your gratitude to your parish clergy by some meaningful gestures of appreciation.

### **JULY – ST. PAUL: EARLY LIFE AND TRANSFORMATION**

**Scripture:** Acts 21:17-22:21; 2 Corinthians 11:16-33; 12:7-10

**Reflection and Action Item:** St. Paul readily admits that he has “a past.” But we all do, don't we? With him, though, we are called by Jesus to turn our backs to our sinfulness and our faces toward Him that we might live in holiness and righteousness and, in doing so, lead others to Him as well. This will not always be easy for us, just as it was often a struggle for the Apostle. Yet, the love of Jesus compels us to keep trying. Each week this month, make some personal or family sacrifice (e.g., fasting from a meal, abstaining from a favorite food or recreational activity, etc.) that those who have not yet come to know Jesus as their Lord may come to see and embrace the salvation and peace that He alone offers.

**Schedule** Mass for those Grieving

### **AUGUST – JOB**

**Scripture:** Job 1:1-2:10; 17:1-16; 38:1-41:34; 42:1-6

**Reflection and Action Item:** The story of Job is both a literary masterpiece and an attempt to theologically plumb the depths of the great mystery of human suffering. At the end of the Book, though, the mystery remains, and all that Job—and we—come to understand is that suffering is somehow part of God's great

plan. As Christians, we have an advantage that Job did not—we know that the key to this riddle comes in the shape of a Cross.

Yet, from the ancient story of Job we learn that we must persevere in affliction, even when we don't completely understand. We know that God is with us always and so we can remain confident in his love even when suffering comes our way. As an act of compassion this month, pray **Psalm 46** every Friday, asking that those who are experiencing some burden, illness or hardship may draw their strength and hope from Christ crucified and risen.

### **SEPTEMBER – ST. STEPHEN**

Scripture: Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59; Matthew 1:17-22

#### Reflection and Action Item:

St. Stephen was the first Christian Martyr who died showing his complete faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Merciful Father, we celebrate the receiving of Saint Stephen into eternal glory. He died praying for those who stoned him. Help us to imitate his goodness and to love our enemies. How can we show our love for those who don't like us?

As we honor St. Stephen and celebrate the Solemnity of Brotherly Love this month - do a kind deed for at least two people who do not like you this month to show the love of God within you.

**Schedule** Zoom video conference: Soup, Sandwich & Sermon or Wine and Cheese Gathering – Adult Education

### **OCTOBER – TERESA OF AVILA**

Scripture: Psalm 42, Psalm 121

Reflection and Action Item: St. Teresa of Avila is a master of the Christian spiritual life and a true role model for all who aspire to follow the Lord, regardless of their station in life. Her story is one of remaining steadfast in doing what Jesus asked of her for the sake of the Kingdom, diligently overcoming both inner doubts and external obstacles, while always trying to grow closer to Christ through her daily prayer life.

This beautiful prayer she composed speaks to her unshakable trust in Jesus, even amidst the trials of this life: ***“Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. All things are passing away: God never changes. Patience obtains all things. Whoever has God lacks nothing; God alone suffices.”***

This month, recite her short prayer every day and sometime click on this link to read a little of her story: [https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=208#wiki](https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=208#wiki)

### **NOVEMBER – ST. STANISLAUS**

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:7-15; 1 Peter 3:14-17; Luke 9:23-26; John 15:18-21

#### Reflection Prayer and Action Item:

Stanislaus of Krakow (1030-1079) is the patron saint of Poland. In his episcopal ministry he stood up to and challenged the king for his cruelty towards people. This eventually led to the king killing him with a sword.

Lord God of mercies, for whose honor Your Bishop Stanislaus fell to the sword of his persecutors. Grant that, as we reverence the memory of St. Stanislaus who safeguarded the poor and outcast and gave his life defending your sacred Gospel, we may persevere, strong in faith, following his example of self-sacrifice and fortitude. What ways can you continue to be strong in faith even in times of trial?

Offer support and prayer for someone who has been persecuted for living their Christian Faith. Also, as we celebrate Thanksgiving this month, let us show our thanks to Almighty God by helping others who are in need.

**Schedule** Mass and Event (Breakfast) for those who serve

**Schedule** Zoom video conference: Soup, Sandwich & Sermon or Wine and Cheese Gathering – Adult Education

## **DECEMBER – OUR BLESSED MOTHER AND ST. JOSEPH**

*Scripture:* Matthew 1:18-25, 2:1-23; Luke 2:1-7, 22-52

*Reflection and Action Item:* The Holy Family of Nazareth is the chosen instrument by which the Savior entered into human history. The Blessed Mother and St. Joseph are the first group of disciples—indeed, the first domestic Church—for they heard and believed the Good News and then together responded in humble obedience to the will of the Father, even when things were not easy. They sacrificially put Jesus first and show us what we can become if we but do the same.

Their family life is the first, greatest and clearest example of the kind of cooperation that we too are called to give to God's grace as He seeks to make Jesus present in the world through us. Every day this month, recite the *Daily Family Prayer*, asking the Blessed Mother of God and St. Joseph to pray for your family and all the families of the Church.

*Schedule and conduct* Advent Retreat/Penitential Service

## **PNCC CHURCH EVENING RETREATS**

During 2021 our Church will hold a couple of evening discipleship retreats via zoom. Our first will be on Wednesday January 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm and focus on Discipleship. More information will be forthcoming on this retreat and others during the year.

## **PARISH ENGAGEMENT– PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL**

As we look forward to a post-Coivd world we need to begin to plan for a return and renewal of our worship and building the Kingdom of God with the opportunities presented to us. During the beginning of 2021, all parishes should discuss and prepare to return to all previous as well as additional discipleship activities/engagement. This should be done by the parish committee, other committees and groups of the parish. While we still wait for vaccination please keep social distancing with masks if meeting in person or use Zoom or other internet video conferencing to begin this important process.

## **SPECIAL MASSES (IN PERSON OR VIRTUALLY DUE THE PANDEMIC PERIOD)**

Again have at least two Special Masses and open them to the community. This would be in addition to our Sunday Mass. During Lent have a Mass for Healing and invite all those who are ill, hurting spiritually or emotionally to attend and spend time in prayer, to hear God's Word and receive Christ in the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Anointing. Use the Mass for Healing during Lent – this will be emailed to all clergy as a reminder at the beginning of Lent.

In the fall (November) have a Mass to Salute those who Serve - for your first responders/those in military service and Veterans. This Mass could be followed by a meal to honor those who serve/who have served. You could also have a Mass in time of tragedy when the need may arise in your community or our nation. These could be followed by a time of fellowship and food at the parish.

You could also schedule a Mass for those grieving anytime during the Church Liturgical Year.

Welcome the community to these Masses by promoting them in your local media and newspaper, as well as fliers and social media. Invite other local groups to join you for these Masses.

## **CONTINUE AND STRENGTHEN YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE**

Begin or continue to post regular messages to your parish Facebook – Instagram pages and appropriate videos to your parish YouTube page. Ask your members to share them through their social media accounts as well to reach

more people. Keep your websites current and user friendly. Take advantage of the opportunities that technology offers to promote our precious faith and how this faith is lived in the work and ministries of your parish.

### **ADULT CONTINUING EDUCATION**

#### **VIDEO CONFERENCING, WINE AND CHEESE CLUB OR SOUP, SANDWICH AND SERMON**

Continue to gather for adult education and formation in our Christian Catholic faith. Perhaps you could use the reflections from the monthly figures for 2021 above. This can be done via Zoom, Internet Conferencing, the Soup, Sandwich and Sermon Concept, Wine and Cheese Gatherings concept (based on the Pub Theology: Beer, Conversation and God), using a Book Club format or even via online.

### **TWO DAYS OF SPIRITUAL RETREAT**

**Lent and one other (Advent)** Pick a day during the seasons of Lent and one other time in 2021 to spend in retreat and prayer. This can be done on either a parish or seniorate level. Ideas for the Retreat include: Mass of the Day, special Lenten/Advent service of Penance, Scripture Readings/Reflections and Meditations, Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament; For Lent: Stations of the Cross, Sorrowful Lamentations, etc. This can be open and advertised to the local community either in person or virtually.

### **CONTINUE THE BUSINESS FREE ZONE**

For 10 minutes prior to the celebration of Holy Mass have a time when the pastor is unavailable for Church business and that no other things are being discussed but a focus on the Holy Sacrifice of Mass. This will continue to bring an enhanced spirituality and reverence for the Eucharist to our parishes. Encourage use of the introductory pages of the Mass booklet – *especially page 8* as well as prayers from our Prayer Book preparing for Holy Mass and Confession.

### **COMPLETE AT LEAST SEVEN COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS**

It is important that parishes continue their outreach into the local community. This year we are increase the project by another one and making it seven. These efforts will create a greater presence of the parish in the community. Even during this ongoing pandemic there are many opportunities and ways that we can live out our discipleship and put our faith into action bettering our local communities and thus our world.

#### ***The 5 Themes for the Future Direction of our Holy Church from the 24<sup>th</sup> PNCC General Synod and further expanded upon at the 25<sup>th</sup> PNCC General Synod***

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| I. Growth and Membership | II. Increase Spirituality |
| III. Lifelong Learning   | IV. Sacred Vocations      |
| V. Community Involvement |                           |

