ST. MICHAEL ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

 PO Box 103

 St. Michael, Pennsylvania 15951

 Rev. Brian L. Warchola, Administrator MASSES:



(814) 495-9640 Saturday 4:00 pm

 Sunday Morning 8:00 am

Secretary: Michele Panick 10:30 am

Bookkeeper: Kathy Kalicky Daily Mass See Bulletin

DRE: Laurie Sloan Holy Days See Bulletin

Maintenance: Rodney Turgeon

 Office Hours:

PHONES: 8:30 am to 3:30 pm

Rectory / Office: (814) 495-9640 Monday, Tues., Thurs., Friday

Fax: (814) 495-9424 Confessions:

Rel. Education: (814) 495-4873 Saturday 3:30 pm to 3:45 pm

Parish Website Sunday 7:30 am to 7:45 am

www.saintmichaelchurch.weebly.com 10:00 am to 10:15 am

Secretaries’ E-mail Anytime Requested

saintmichaelsecretaries@yahoo.com

YEAR: 2017 NUMBER: 41

SERVING GOD AND COMMUNITY FOR OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS!

BAPTISM: By Appointment. Reserve at least one month in advance.

 Preparation classes are necessary.

MARRIAGE: Plan at least nine months in advance.

 Preparation sessions are necessary.

FUNERALS: Arrangements are made in conjunction with the funeral home.

 Eulogies should be given at the funeral home at the time of the wake service or at the luncheon.

REGISTRATION Those new to the area, newlyweds, and single adults, (even if registered

 and before with their families) are asked to register by calling the Parish Office.

MEMBERSHIP: Every parishioner must be registered. This is a condition for admission

 to our Program and reception of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, First Penance, First Eucharist, and Matrimony; also, for testimonial letters or sponsorship of Baptism and Confirmation outside the Parish.

VISITATION: We are concerned and want to be advised when someone is ill at

 home or in the hospital. Call the rectory to have the shut-in placed on our monthly Holy Communion calls or seriously ill prayer list.

SACRAMENTAL Requires parish registration and active Mass participation for Baptism

POLICY: and Marriage.

BULLETIN ARTICLES: Articles are due to the Parish Office by Noon on Mondays.

 Twenty - Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time , October 8, 2017

  **The Holy Rosary**

MASS INTENTIONS: (October 9 – October 15, 2017)

Monday 8:00 AM Fritzie & Michael Beaver req. by Remy (Ray) Beaver

Tuesday 8:00 AM Barbara Michaels req. by Blaise Michaels

Wednesday 8:00 AM Most Holy Trinity, South Fork & St. Benedict’s, Johnstown

 12:05 PM St. Benedict’s, Johnstown

Thursday 8:00 AM Theresa (Bertolino) Fleck req. by cousin, Christine Smay & Family

Friday 8:00 AM Lois Jean Papcunik req. by Matilda Blozevich

Saturday 4:00 PM Maria Liimatainen req. by John & Susan Poldiak & Family

Sunday 8:00 AM Birthday Remembrance for Rose Chalan

 req. by Pauline Minor & Family

Sunday 10:30 AM People of the Parish

LITURGICIAL APPOINTMENTS:

Saturday, October 14 4:00 PM Offertory Procession

Lector: Susan Poldiak Poldiak Family

Minister of the Host: Vince Arena

Ministers of the Cup: Karen Myers & Mary Partsch

Altar Servers: Ana Spangler & Mykala Drobnick

Cantor: Amy Spangler

Greeter: Darlene Marshall

Sunday, October 15 8:00 AM Offertory Procession

Lector: Joseph Faher Nick & Pauline Minor

Minister of the Host: Marie Bernard

Ministers of the Cup: Cathy Faher & Pauline Minor

Altar Servers: Andrew Martin & Brian Bernard

Cantor: Anita Lorek

Greeter: Pete Parisi

Sunday, October 1510:30 AM Offertory Procession

Lector: Michael Barton Rick Roberts Family

Minister of the Host: Sharon Paterson

Ministers of the Cup: Edie Knobloch & Susan Wieczorek

Altar Servers: Elizabeth & Ian Dobbins

Cantor: Amy Dobbins

Greeter: REACH Students

Sunday, October 15 Collection Counters

 Tom & Sharon Paterson,

 Robert Casti, Sara Zybura

Weare placing names of the sick in the bulletin for prayer providing they give permission. *May the* *Divine Physician send healing grace for those for* *whom we pray:* Allen C. Rosemas, Patricia Murphy, Bernice Myers, Dwight Fyock, Lori Facciani, Dylon Wills, Dawn Hagen, Debbie Dibert, Missy, Joanne (Kolar) Hufford, Christine Flanagan, Ayden Alan Grata, Remy Beaver, Mary Lou Offman, Marian Chuckalovcak, Arlene Diamond, Mary Zangaglia, Dorothy Rosemas, Natalie Zerby, Patricia Grata, Michael Wadsworth, Valencia & Frank Tursi, Homer Locher, Brayden Schofield, Michelle Kasper, Diane Kingera, Allison Krischer, Ted Paluch, Brandt Hutzel, Pearl Litzinger, Patrick Munro, Fran Baldassarre, Corey Lybarger, Kristen Sinosky Long, Helen Ranieri, Cresta Micik, Basil Costantino, Madison McCrory, Laura, Joe Yoder, Dolores Yanzetich, Sandy Krug, Wanda Gramling, Merna Smay, Muriel “Jean” Wiesheier, Heidi Allison, Agnes Plummer, Jennifer Hagans, Mary McCall, Sean, Holly, Shane, Owen Taylor, Keith Hoyer, Gail Faher, Marjorie (Latshaw) Feldman, Derrick Varnish, Daniel Koshute, Vincent Koshute, Karen Lovrich, Melissa Cordek, Michelle Elliott, Shannon Meyers, Heather Romanow, Mackston Barrick, Connor Thomas, Erin, Pat, Mary Agnes Nastase, Mary Ann Bertolino, Dick Wilson, Dan Pauley, Peggy Mulvehill, Jane Plummer, Izzy Bihun, Sharon Poldiak, Erica Mitzelfeld and all of the sick of our parish, the homebound, those in nursing homes, those who care for them, and those in the military along with their families. (Please call the Rectory to have your name removed from the list when no longer seriously ill. Thank You.



LAST WEEK’S COLLECTION

Adults $2,947.00

Loose $ 245.00

Youth $ 58.00

Monthly $ 801.00

Maintenance Fund $ 63.00

Religious Ed. Fund $ 15.00

Retired Priests Med. $ 30.00

Total $4,159.00

We sincerely thank and ask God’s blessing upon all who have care and concern for our parish.

*October 8, 2017* Mt. 21:33-43

Children will reject many parental values as they grow up and develop their own identity. Like the landowner in today’s gospel, parents may feel disappointed or rejected after investing so much of themselves. Today Jesus advises parents to make rejection “the cornerstone” of a new and richer relationship with your developing children.

OCTOBER 2017 PARISH TICKET WINNERS

Day Date Amount Number Winner



Sunday October 1, 2017 $100 948 Don & Marie Plummer

Monday October 2, 2017 $ 75 435 John & Valerie Margo

Tuesday October 3, 2017 $ 75 789 Paul J. Kundrod

Wednesday October 4, 2017 $ 75 318 Suzanne Zeigler

**OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH** ~ 2010 12th Ave., Altoona, is commemorating the Centennial of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima by holding Eucharistic Adoration & Benediction for 2 hours on October 13th. Holy Hours are from 6-8 PM. Each holy hour will start with praying of the Rosary for Peace in the World as Our Lady originally requested and the time in between will be spent in quiet meditation. All are Welcome!

**HEALING MASS** ~ Monday, October 23, 2017, at 7:00 PM, at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. Fr. Bill Kiel, from the Diocese of Greensburg, will be the main celebrant. All are welcome, especially those in need of physical, emotional, or spiritual healing, and those who support and care for them as well. Music for the Mass will be led by the Cathedral Charismatic Prayer Group Music Ministry. For more information, please call 814-941-3832.

FATIMA DEVOTIONS ~ The Franciscan Friars, T.O.R., from Loretto, invite you to participate with them in celebrating the Fatima Devotions on Friday, October 13th, at 6:30 PM at the Basilica of St. Michael the Archangel. The singing will be led by the choir from St. John the Evangelist of Altoona and the sermon will be delivered by Bishop Mark Bartchak. We would like to extend a cordial welcome to all.

CEMETERY CLEAN-UP ~ As you clean out your gardens and flowerbeds for winter, remember to clean up the cemeteries too. Please remove all decorations and solar lights that do not work from St. Bartholomew, St. James and St. Anthony cemeteries by Oct. 30. Any flowers and non-working solar lights will be disposed of on Nov. 1. Decorations may be placed on graves for the holiday season but must be removed for Spring Clean-up in March.

SAVE THE DATE ~ The Shroud of Turin Talk will be held once again at St. Benedict Parish, 2310 Bedford St., Johnstown, Sunday, October 29th at 3:00 PM. In 2013 Bill Wingard established “Shroud Talks” to present the history and science of the Shroud of Turin and tackle the biggest mystery…Is the shroud the actual burial cloth? Personal research coupled with the knowledge and help of the original photographer, Barrie Schwortz, for scientific evaluation in 1978 make for a powerful and comprehensive presentation that will not disappoint. You are invited to hear the talk and see the full size replica of the Shroud of Turin. Attendees are encouraged to bring their cameras. Priests will be available after the presentation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Not tickets are required; a love offering will be collected. For more information contact Deacon Michael Russo at 814-288-3036 or email: michael.russo@atlanticbb.net. All are welcome!

*Stewardship Reflections* ~

Have consumerism and materialism stolen your claim to the vineyard that is the Kingdom of God here on earth? Jesus calls each of us to share fruit, our God-given talents, with others.

 Catholic Ministries Drive $23,811.00

 Raised: $14,595.00

 Balance: $ 9,216.00

 Number of Responses: 90

Thank you to all who have participated in the Catholic Ministries Drive.

Please join them in supporting our Parish and our Diocesan ministries. If you do not have a pledge card, you may send your gift (made payable to the “Catholic Ministries Drive”) directly to the parish office. Thank you for your generous response!



The Sanctuary Candle will burn as a

birthday remembrance for Mary Ann Poldiak

req. by John, Susan, Jen & Johnny

and the Our Lady of Grace Candle will burn as a

birthday remembrance for Betty Pcola

req. by Her Loving Family

during the week of October 8, 2017

Your text here



I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our parish on behalf of the Discalced Carmelite Nuns of St. Therese of Lisieux. Rod and I delivered your very generous amount of donations to the nuns on Monday morning, October 2nd, the Feast of the Guardian Angels, the day after the nuns completed their nine day novena to St. Therese. They were over joyed and very thankful to all of you. They assured us of their prayers for our parish. Thank you again for being so charitable!

 *Fr. Brian, Rod, & some of the Nuns*

FALL CLERGY GATHERING ~ On Monday, Tuesday, & Wednesday, October 16-18, 2017 the priests and deacons of the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese will gather with Bishop Mark Bartchak, J.C.D. at Seven Springs in Champion, PA. In order to make it possible for all active priests and deacons to attend this important meeting, here is the name and telephone number of the clergy available to provide emergency coverage. Johnstown/Cambria/Southern (West) Deaneries: Rev. Matthew Misurda ~ (814) 410-7251.

SPAGHETTI DINNER TICKETS ~ This Sunday, October 8th, is our Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser from 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM. Tickets will be sold at the door - $8 for Adults, $5 for children 5-12, and children under 5- free. Take outs available and walk-ins welcome!

APPLEBEE’S DINING TO DONATE: ~ This provides an opportunity for us to raise funds and host a fun night at Applebee’s, all while earning 15% of purchases. Applebee’s will donate 15% of your total sales (excluding tax & tip) from the flyers collected during our fundraiser date & time – NOVEMBER 5, 11:00 AM – 9:00 PM at the Johnstown Applebee’s. Flyers will be given out here at St. Michael’s prior to our November 5th dining date. (Last weekend in October). You can give as many flyers out to family & friends. Flyers are not to be distributed in the restaurant or within the perimeter of the parking lot. Doing so will result in a voided event. Present flyers to your server and St. Michael’s will earn 15% of your total bill.

DISASTER RELIEF ~ Bishop Mark Bartchak requests help with the recovery efforts in the aftermath of the storms and earthquakes in Puerto Rico and Mexico. Bishop Mark is asking for our prayers as well as our financial aid to those most directly affected by these storms and earthquakes. All dioceses throughout the country are participating in this special collection. A second collection for Catholic Charities USA will be taken on the weekend of October 14th and 15th. Thank you for whatever assistance you are able to provide.



Religious Education And Christian Helping

October 8, 2017

 SHYCON 2017

 Attention-All High School Students in Grades 9—12, SHYCON (Senior High Youth Conference) 2017 is scheduled for Sunday, October 22, 2017 at Saint Francis University.

Registration forms are due back to our RE Office by today, October 8, 2017.

Our keynote speaker for SHYCON 2017 is ValLimar Jansen. Her style of sharing her faith through acting and storytelling is amazing! She will help our youth appreciate their call and their faith! Check her out on YOUTUBE! This year’s theme in “CALLED TO BE A DISCIPLE.” The day’s activities will help youth understand what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and their mission as a follower. It will make them think about, “What a Disciple looks like,” “How they are called and invited to be a disciple.” *This year during SHYCON, we will once again participate and have the chance to pack meals for the hungry. All groups will be packing individual meals with the supplies provided on site that will be boxed and delivered to those in need by the organization Rise Against Hunger.*

Saint Michael Parish . . . .You can be a part of SHYCON 2017 !!!

Helping Hands RISE AGAINST HUNGER!!!



CALLED TO Be Disciples! How will you answer??

Please—Help us help others!!

*We are looking for individuals, groups or businesses that would like to participate in SHYCON with us by helping us to purchase the kits needed for our youth to pack these meals for the hungry. This way more than just the participants can participate in the Corporal Work of Mercy! We are hoping this year that more groups will consider collecting at the parish level and donating those funds for the project.*

Lend A Helping Hand!! Every Donation Helps!!

*Your monetary donation will help purchase kits for those that might otherwise go hungry!*

Make checks payable to:

Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown

Helping Hands Project

933 S. Logan Boulevard

Hollidaysburg, PA 16648

For more information, or to make a donation, contact Francine Swope in the Diocesan Youth Ministry Office at (814)317-2646 or by email at fswope@dioceseaj.org

 11th Grade Confirmation Class ~ Important Dates for Upcoming Requirements

*Fall Confirmation Session 11 A ~ The Rite of Confirmation: Sunday, October 8, 2017*

 All 11th Grade students will be attending their Fall Session 11A from 9 to 10:30 a.m. in the Parish Hall to fulfill this session requirement.

*\* If the students miss this scheduled session, they are required to attend another*

*parishes scheduled session to fulfill these requirements.*

11th Grade Discipleship Retreat is scheduled for Saturday, November 4th at Saint Francis University. This “FIREstarters Retreat” will be held at the Campus Ministry Center (next to Cafe' Gubbio) in Saint Francis Hall. The retreat will begin at 9:00 a.m. and conclude at 5:00 p.m., which includes a 4:30 p.m. Mass. Lunch will be provided and the $25 cost per student will be paid from our REACH Youth Ministry funds. Parents should have students arrive at 8:45 a.m. and pick-up again at 5:00 p.m. Parents also are invited to return and attend the 4:00 p.m. Mass held at the Immaculate Conception Chapel. "Application for Participation" forms will be provided to the 11th Grade students and permission is required for the students to attend. These forms need returned to the RE Office by October 15th and forwarded to St. Francis to hold our group reservation.

\* If students are not able to make this scheduled retreat date, they are required to attend another parish's Discipleship Retreat to fulfill this requirement. Alternate dates are available throughout the diocese. Inquire in the Religious Education Office.

Our Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown has posted the schedule for Confirmation Masses being celebrated by Bishop Mark L. Bartchak in the Easter season of 2018. Our Saint Michael Parish Confirmation Mass is scheduled for *Thursday, April 5, 2018* at 7:00p.m. and will be held at

Saint John Gualbert Cathedral in Johnstown.

11th Grade Confirmation candidates: With the April 5, 2018 Confirmation date set, keep in mind that as a candidate, you are required to secure at least 25 community service hours for the 11th Grade year by March 1, 2018 to be eligible to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. Community service hours can be acquired within our church through our REACH Youth Ministry Projects or from outside our church community by submitting an individual Service form for each service signed by an adult overseeing that service.

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Grade 9 ~ Confirmation Session 9*A ~ The Creed*

Next Sunday, October 15, 2017 ~ All 9th Grade students will be attending their Fall Session 9A from 9 to 10:20 a.m. in the Parish Hall to fulfill this session requirement.

*\* If the students miss this scheduled session, they are required to attend another*

*parishes scheduled session to fulfill these requirements.*

Date of birth: January 27, 1927
Place of Birth: Bristol, PA
Temporary Profession: February 6, 1973
Perpetual Profession: February 9, 1976
Date of death: June 12, 2011

*“All I can say is that if God could get to me,
he can get to anybody.*
*He gave me a hope and a future.” – Br. Jim*

There are very few friars in our history who have their names found as frequently on Internet search engines as our brother Jim Townsend. It’s hardly ironic that a man who loved to relish in story-telling would have his own story repeated so often and in so many various contexts. Jim sat at friary dinner tables and told stories about himself; he would stand before audiences of hundreds of people and tell stories about himself; and he would stand in the local grocery store or in parking lots talking to people and telling stories about himself. His story is now being recounted by many people who have never even met him or talked to him.

It is a dramatic story.

Maybe some people are into the story because it’s also alluringly “sensational.” Who doesn’t take some “guilty pleasure” in hearing about murders and criminals and victims and justice. But Jim never really wanted to be “sensational.” Jim wanted his story to be known because he wanted to let people know that our God saves, even if his salvation did not appear to him precisely in the form for which he had originally hoped.

 Jim had a different childhood from most friars. His family wasn’t a particularly religious, church-going family. He was born in Bristol, PA, a town in eastern Pennsylvania, on January 27, 1927, but his was not an easy childhood. His mother, Catherine Hawkene Townsend (“Kit”) was chronically ill and spent most of her time in a bed in the downstairs parlor of their home. His father, Patrick, was not a man who showed much affection and tended to treat his oldest son harshly. Perhaps as a dad, it was easier to treat the other four children more kindly. Jim was not a boy who took discipline easy.

He himself would frame his childhood as marked by a rage against and an envy of his younger brother, Bob. Whatever the cause, Jim was always getting into trouble: stealing and fights were common. It wasn’t any wonder that he entered a reform school at 8.

 Returning from reform school at age 10, he was not welcome. His mom was to die within two years and his father sent him to an orphanage for the control and discipline he himself couldn’t provide. Jim was sent back home for stealing money within a few months. At the age of 14, Jim entered the Marines as World War II began, thanks to his father’s ready signature on documents attesting to his being of age, but he continued to battle his demons and was court-martialed for hitting an officer while in training. Finally, he was sent to a juvenile detention center in Camp Hill, PA, on charges of assault, battery and attempted rape of a young girl.

Jim moved to Pittsburgh because of a parole officer he respected, just one of a few respected “father” figures who would be there at important signposts of his life. Getting a job at Allegheny General Hospital, he met his future wife, Alice Moss. They married in 1947 in a small Methodist Church in Pittsburgh soon after which Alice became pregnant with twins. The couple moved to Ohiopyle, PA, to work on the farm of a kind police officer who witnessed Jim’s talent for working hard and completing a job. Unfortunately, a 19 year old husband who drank would not make an ideal husband or father. Jim’s drinking only allowed his rage and envy to surface irrationally, and on November 13, 1947, he shot and killed his expectant wife with a deer rifle in the kitchen of their home. He was sentenced to life in prison and was consigned initially to Western Penitentiary.

A network news magazine story might end there: a story of the tragedy and despair of a violent man brought to justice. But God was just beginning to shape Jim’s story, and he would often refer to God as “Slick,” because he would eventually capture the captive’s heart. God’s justice is mercy, and that fact had yet to reveal itself. He had heard that living conditions were less severe in Rockview State Penitentiary in Bellefonte, PA. His plan was to excel in good behavior and get his ticket out of “the Penn.” He became the custodian of the chapel and would later work in the chaplain’s office. Unwittingly, it was the first time he had to interact with prisoners on a personal level, hearing their stories and hearing so much of his own in them.

Everything “came together” at Rockview. It was there that he met another mentor and confidante, Fr. Richard Walsh. Having joined the Order of Secular Franciscans as a further attempt to “play the part” of the good prisoner, he was obliged to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation regularly. It was in confession at Rockview where he bared his soul and brought his shadowy past before the Lord. He found a “brother” in Fr. Walsh who heard his story and brought God’s forgiveness and compassion. Nightmares of his wife and of a “little boy” in her arms, which tormented him from that dark day in 1947, ended.

After 20 years as a prisoner, Jim was paroled for his “good behavior,” and returned to Pittsburgh, PA. He maintained his connection to the Secular Franciscans, and through a member of the local fraternity, he met his first Capuchin friar, our brother Fr. Lester Knoll. Lester worked in the Vocation ministry centered at St. Francis Friary in Brookline (Pgh), PA. Jim had been inspired in prison by the story of the Trappist Thomas Merton and his change of life that led him to the monastery. Fr. Lester thought it best to take one step at a time. This was no ordinary vocational recruitment.

Beginning as an “associate member” of the Province in residence at the friary in Brookline, both Jim and the community were given time to sense the genuineness of God’s call. Jim was invested as a Capuchin on February 6, 1972. He was 45 years old and spent his novitiate year with men who were half his age. He was never paternalistic or treated the other friars as though he had more “experience” than they did. He was a brother to them and they recall him with a smile. Jim had never been to college – and he finished high school only in prison. But Jim worked hard and led them in tasks that they would have preferred to avoid.

Making his first profession of vows in 1973, Br. Jim was assigned as Director of Maintenance at St. Fidelis High School Seminary in Herman, PA, where workers were welcome. He prided himself on a well-waxed floor and clean cars. He found prayer to be a constant place for solace and for peace, and he could enjoy a good story in the colloquy room as much as a rosary prayed in the Chapel. He supervised the student work program, and though the students encountered the details of Jim’s “story” at some point in their years at St. Fidelis, they would only remember and know the friendly and humble friar who treated them with respect and kindness. If a student didn’t know how to wax a floor, Jim would teach him. If he didn’t do it correctly, Jim would do it for him, but you never heard Jim denounce or degrade someone for their lack of expertise. Yes, one would always risk becoming a part of his future story-telling, but he always talked about you with a smile and with a great respect for human diversity.

His perpetual profession was a foregone conclusion, given his own gifts and the ways that fraternal life and prayer were so important to him. The community acknowledged God’ grace and call that had been operative in his heart for 20 years. Returning to the novitiate to direct the work program of the novices in 1975, he made his perpetual vows as a Capuchin there in 1976.

Br. Jim spent 40 years of his life as a Capuchin friar. His assignments would run the gamut of the Province from east to west. He was part of the first fraternity to minister in the Diocese of Cleveland at the Conversion of St. Paul Shrine downtown. The Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration there remember him as a man of work and prayer. He was also a man they relied on if they felt any danger or if someone wandered off the streets and into the church. Once, the extern sisters called him in the middle of the night because they heard some noises in the church – Jim responded immediately, with a baseball bat in hand.

He continued to touch the men in formation as a model and as a brother. Whether it was the postulants in Cleveland, the novices in Annapolis, MD, the temporary professed friars in Washington, DC, or the high school students in Herman, PA, Br. Jim was an educator. He led people of little experience in the “world” to know about a God who was “nuts” for sinners. Br. Jim loved sinners too. Very early in his religious life, at the invitation and provocation of his friend, Fr. Walsh, Jim would regularly visit Rockview Penitentiary to talk to his “fellow prisoners” about his experience with the Lord. It is said that he brought the hardest of hearts to tears as they heard their stories reflected in him and hoped for the kind of “salvation” that Jim had experienced.

Perhaps Jim’s own favorite years were those in which he lived on the staff of the Capuchin Hermitage, begun near Herman, PA, in 1989 and concluding in Wheeling, WV, in 2001. It was during these years that Jim

thrived. He loved his prayer time and the opportunity for spiritual reading. He would visit the children of the school at St. Mary’s in Herman, and they would always find a warm embrace and a welcoming smile among them. When a Padre Pio statue was being erected shortly after Pio’s beatification and canonization, the school children thought that it was a statue of Jim. Could Br. Jim ever imagine that little children would consider him worthy of such an honor?

It was in the Hermitage that Jim worked among the Secular Franciscans of Butler and in the Hermitage that he found a charismatic community and another way to express his joyful praise of God’s goodness. His bout with colon cancer in 2001 was a blow to his energy and stamina, but only Jim would find a great opportunity for yet more tales of his colostomy and the various imperfections of medical apparatuses in its wake.

Health problems did not stop Brother Jim from his ministry to Rockview, where he continued to preach at the annual retreat. His dedication to the inmates of Rockview inspired the prison to rename the "Monsignor Walsh Award," which honors one prisoner at a banquet at the end of the retreat each year, the "Jim Townsend Award." It was a special honor for Brother Jim, who had received the award when he was a Rockview inmate.

Word of Jim’s “conversion story” found a new outlet when a Lutheran Minister, the Reverend Paul Everett, visited the Hermitage and found the witness so compelling. His work, The Prisoner: An Invitation to Hope, was published in 2004 and has been cited and quoted in innumerable homilies, high school Religion classes and, yes, in prisons.

Some people who did not know Br. Jim or had never met him would almost reflexively question Jim’s motivation and the genuineness of his conversion. One friar remembers substituting for a pastor whose parish was hosting Jim at the local CCD evening. When the students went home and recounted the story, the phone at the rectory continued to ring well into the evening with most calls lamenting how the parish would “dare” to invite a murderer and molester to speak to their children. Many would decry how a man “like that” could “hide” in a Religious Order when he should be spending his whole life in prison. But they did not know the man we knew; nor do they know the God we came to praise through Jim’s words.

Jim’s health forced him to return to Herman, PA, in 2001 and to fraternal service of the friary and the parish school. Eventually, he needed more care and was assigned to St. Augustine Friary in Pittsburgh in 2005. He is still missed for the odd jobs and undone tasks he would find to “help out.”

As his health declined in 2011, he took up residence at Vincentian Home where he died with the nearby novices at his bedside, on June 12, 2011. Those who know Jim are absolutely sure that Jim died in the arms of His Father.

His good friend and confidante, Fr. Lester, spoke at his funeral of the Prodigal Son and of Jim’s own fear of trusting in a loving Father who might receive him despite his reckless living and the hurts he had caused. “Trusting his Father took a lifetime,” but in finding Him, Jim has shown us all a thing or two about mercy and redemption. The love and support Jim felt from his Capuchin brothers over the years enabled him to become more convinced that God really did love him just the way he was: he was an Irishman who liked to exaggerate a bit in story-telling, and he was a hard worker who took pride in a polished floor.

One of the ways Jim had kept sane while in prison was to keep track of the days. If you asked how old he was, he would never tell you in years -- he would tell you in months. Thanks to Lester’s calculation, most friars can still smile to know that Jim was 1,014 months old when he died.

He was buried in the friars’ plot of St. Mary Cemetery, Herman, PA, on June 15, 2011. We can only imagine the people who, through the books and the stories, are yet to learn of Jim’s experience and share the story with others. Perhaps they will come upon his final resting place and continue to find there a testimony to God’s Goodness and Mercy in the witness of a man who, so unexpectedly, was their most grateful recipient.

http://www.capuchin.com/index.php/2011/107-friars/necrology/2011/165-obit-townsend

From Fr. Brian’s homily from last Sunday, October 1, 2017.

Jim Townsend, 1927 - 2011

Sunday, October 8 Religious Education Class for Jr./Sr. High / 9:00 AM – 10:20 AM

 Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser / 11:30 – 2:00 PM / Hall

 Second Sunday Food Collection

 Fall Confirmation Session / 11th Grade / 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

 Shycon Registration Forms Due

 Monday, October 9 Mass / 8:00 AM

 Sunday Choir Practice / 7:00 PM

 Martha’s Group / 6:00 PM

 Tuesday, October 10 Mass / 8:00 AM

 Wednesday, October 11 No Mass

 8:00 AM Mass / Most Holy Trinity, South Fork

 8:00 AM & 12:05 PM Mass / St. Benedict’s, Johnstown

 Thursday, October 12 Mass / 8:00 AM

 Religious Education Class for Elementary Grades K-5 / 3:30-4:30

 Saturday Choir Practice / 5:30 PM

 Friday, October 13 Mass / 8:00 AM

 Saturday October 14 Disaster Relief Collection

 UPCOMING EVENTS

 October 15 Disaster Relief Collection

 9th Grade Session / 9 – 10:20 AM

 October 21 & 22 World Mission Sunday

 October 22 Shycon Gr. 9-12 / Loretto, PA

BIRTHRIGHT BASKET PARTY ~ At Ace’s on Chestnut Street–Sunday, October 15, 2017 from 11 AM to 2:00 PM. Drawing @ 1 PM. Over 100 great baskets. $10 includes spaghetti dinner and 25 basket chances. Please call Mary Kay @ 535-8231 for tickets. Advance sale only Thank you for your support of Birthright’s prolife work!

PUMPKIN SPICE AND EVERYTHING NICE TEA ~ The sisters of Beta Epsilon Chapter of the Delta Kappa Gamba Society International are hosting a Pumpkin Spice & Everything Nice Tea on Sunday, October 22nd at 2:00 PM in our church hall. Adults are $20 and children 12 and under are $15. Basket chances will also be available. All proceeds from this event will be used to support our chapter projects, which directly benefit students in our local schools. For tickets, please call Amy Dobbins at 487-4569 or Suzi Blazosky at 495-5287.

OPEN HOUSE ~ The Adams Twp. Vol Fire Co #2 in St. Michael will be holding an Open House to kick off Fire Prevention Week on Sunday October 8th from 1 PM – 4 PM. The event is open to the public. Please stop in to see our newest vehicle acquisition & equipment and visit with the firemen.

ARTS & CRAFTS ~ Saint Michael Home School Association, Loretto, will hold its 38th Annual Arts & Crafts Show & Sale Sat., October 21st & Sun., October 22nd from 10 AM – 4 PM. Many artists & crafts persons will be featured. There will be refreshment, including homemade pies, cookies, apple dumplings, soup & sandwiches. Free parking & admission. The show will be held in Our Lady of Loretto Community Hall next to Saint Michael School.

SPAGHETTI DINNER & BASKET PARTY ~ Sunday, Oct.22 from 11-3 PM at St. Bartholomew Church Hall, Wilmore, to benefit Michael Riva, a disabled Vietnam Vet. Dinner tickets are Adults $10 and Children $5. Call Jane 495-9673 or Ann 495-9298.