

## FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE



Last weekend I shared in my homily an opportunity to help support a “Gun BuyBack” program in Waukegan on April 29 at the Holy Family Parish site of our Sharing Parish Most Blessed Trinity. I wanted to let the parishioners know of an additional invitation to express our love of Jesus this Lent by trying to bring safety, peace and hope to the streets and towns around us.

Bishop Grob, our Auxiliary Bishop in Vicariate 1, is working with the pastor of Most Blessed Trinity, Fr. Tim O’Malley. I was approached by a parishioner who learned of the program and wanted to do something to help its success.

The parishioner of St. Mary’s, who has asked to remain anonymous, has offered an invitation to the rest of the parish. The parishioner is donating \$5,000 in the hopes that parishioners would come together and collectively match, maybe even exceed that lead donation in an effort towards peace. I shared with Bishop Grob and Fr. O’Malley of the generosity of this parishioner and they both are excited and very grateful with the hopes that the effort next month will be successful.

Major crimes have increased in previous years in Waukegan and police are making a concerted effort to get illegal guns off the streets. The gun buyback is intended to rid the community of unwanted and unnecessary firearms and potentially reduce gun-related crimes.

You may have asked the question: “What happens to firearms after they are turned in?” Members of the Waukegan Police force will be coordinating the effort on April 29. All firearms will be checked to see if they are stolen or used in any crimes. They will then be destroyed or used for training purposes by the Waukegan Police Department. If you want to share alms this Lent to make the program a success, checks can be returned to the parish marked on the envelope – “Gun BuyBack.”



Last Sunday, Bishop Lombardo presided at the Rite of Institution into the Ministry of Reader for those in the diaconate formation program. Pablo Janowicz and his wife Ines are pictured here with Bishop Lombardo in the Chaplet of the Immaculate Conception at Mundelein Seminary.

At the institution, Bishop Lombardo charged Pablo and his classmates to be faithful in handing on the Word of God so that it may grow strong in the hearts of His people. Additionally, being an instituted Reader also means “taking on a special office within the Christian community.” Besides proclaiming the word in the liturgical assembly, an instituted Reader is responsible for:

- ◆ instructing children and adults in the faith;
- ◆ preparing them to receive the sacraments worthily;
- ◆ bringing the message of salvation to those who have not yet received it.

This is an awesome responsibility. But it is part of the continuing discernment process as Pablo moves forward on his journey in formation and listens to God’s plan for him in future ministry.

During formation this year, Pablo is attending academic courses which may include Church History, Old Testament, New Testament, Ecclesiology, Spiritual Theology, and Introductory Homiletics. He also participates in Theological Reflection Groups and will attend a cohort retreat prior to his institution as Reader. This year he is engaged in a Service to the Word field education. He attends monthly spiritual direction and is present for numerous formation sessions as he continues his journey on the Candidate Stage toward the Order of Deacon. You can find Pablo in the back row of the class picture with Bishop Lombardo.



Thanks to the many parishioners who generously supported the Guild of St. Mary Easter Sharing Basket program this year. Easter Baskets are to be returned this weekend, through Sunday afternoon at 1:00pm. Baskets can be turned in to the School lobby, through the Oakwood Avenue entrance to the Upper Grade Center.

May we be guided by God’s generous grace this Lent,

*Fr. Mike Nacur*