



DECEMBER NEWSLETTER 2010



ST. JOHN BERCHMANS CHURCH & SCHOOL

I hope this newsletter finds you in good health and peace.

I have a lot of good memories from the Thanksgiving dinner we had last month for the parish volunteers. It made me happy to see so many people attend and the large number of youth from our Life Teen helping out. They say the youth is our future and if that is true then our future looks very good. I am also grateful to our Pastoral Council for the decorations they put up and for preparing the meal plates. These two groups, the counsel members and the teens worked very well together. Many times I hear of parishes where the adults and youth do their own separate thing and cannot or will not work together. This was not the case with us. It made me very happy to see how well these two different groups worked together for the benefit of our volunteers. Last month we also had our annual turkey bingo and thanksgiving delivery of groceries and turkeys to needy families of our community. A lot of food came in and it made me feel good to know that many families who would not be having a Thanksgiving dinner would now be able to have one because of the generosity of the good people of St. John Berchmans. I know God will bless all those who had a part in this ministry to our needy. The turkey bingo was once again a big success. Under the able leadership of Mrs. Dora Duran we had a very good attendance in the school cafeteria. Everyone had a good time and all the money that was made will go to the normal operating expenses of our parish. Dora wishes to thank everyone who helped her make this event so successful and we are also grateful to her for all she has done not only at this turkey bingo but through the many years she has been in the parish. Dora is an excellent role model for all of us. When our school closed she stepped up and led the parish in a successful effort to reopen it. When we had our 100th anniversary she was there to help us. She is always there for our bingos and is always ready to help out in whatever way she can. May God bless her and her family for all the good she does for us.

The big parish event continues to be raising the funds needed for a new school roof. As mentioned in last month's newsletter, the current roof is in dire need of replacement. It is on borrowed time. Whenever it rains I pray the roof will not begin leaking. Recently we sent out emails and had bulletin inserts asking for contributions to this cause. So far the response has been very slow. One person gave a thousand dollars a couple gave \$100.00 in memory of their deceased daughter and still another person decided against the purchase of a new dress and instead gave that money to the church for the roof. These are just a few of the contributors that have made a contribution to the roof fund so far. The money that has come in to date from these individuals and the St. John Berchmans Ultreya group is \$2,980.00 dollars. As mentioned in last month's newsletter the estimated cost of a new roof this summer is \$235,000.00 dollars. The longer we wait the more it will cost. We have set up an account at St. Josephs Credit Union and all the money we get for this project will be deposited into this account. Since the campaign started I have gotten two emails. One asked about putting on a softball tournament and the other had mentioned that in the past someone wrote grants for what we needed and if I knew who the person was. I wish I could say I know who the person is but I don't. If anyone could help me with this or knows someone who can do this for us please let me know. I would sure appreciate it.

This month we will be having a lot of things going on. The Posada schedule is posted in the church and rectory. Please take a look at it and attend as many as your can. These are great times when we get to know each other better as we reenact the journey of Mary and Joseph as they looked for a place to stay. The Advent reconciliation service will be on Tuesday the fourteenth starting at 7:00pm. There will be plenty of other bilingual priests coming so please make plans to come. This will be the only parish confessions we will be having before Christmas. The next penitential service will be sometime during Lent. Recently a group of young adults formed for the purpose of getting together for fellowship, fun, and mutual support. They have heard of our need for a new school roof and want to help out. They will be having their first annual pancake breakfast on Sunday, December 12th from 8:30am till 1:30pm in the school cafeteria. Tickets are just \$5.00 each and include two pancakes, scrambled eggs, and ones choice of sausage or bacon, milk or orange juice. There will also be coffee, water; soft drinks and baked goods available for sale. Even though this group has just formed and could use this money for their things they

have decided to give all the profits from this pancake sale to the church for the new school roof. For tickets or more information please contact Jasmin Hernandez, 830-237-8133, Marisol Ledesma, 210-884-2006, or John and Courtney Morales. Please give this group your full support. The more profit they make the more we can deposit into our roof account.

Don't forget to put the following dates on your calendar:

- Wednesday, December 8th, Feast of The Immaculate Conception, (a holy day of obligation) 7:00 pm mass on Tuesday, December 7th and 8:15am mass with Bishop Cantu and school children on December 8th.
- Tuesday, December 14th, Parish Confessions, 7:00pm
- Friday, December 24th, Christmas Eve Mass, 6:00pm and 12:00 midnight
- Saturday, December 25th, Christmas Day Mass, 10:00am

Out finances continue to be a challenge. Because we have an older facility something is always breaking down. At this time some of the lights in the parking lot have not been working correctly. I have had electricians look at them and they are trying to find out what is the exact cause of the problem. It seems like the trouble could be much more than bad bulbs or ballast. The thought of what this could cost unsettles me. While it may be expensive the safety of our people must be taken into consideration. I have confidence in this electrical company doing the work. They would not sell us something we do not need and will do a good job. Please pray we can get to the cause of this setback without spending a lot of money. The garage doors for the school bus, festival storage, and for my car and the lawnmower continue to be problematic. This has been going on since my first day here in the parish and I am tired of it. Again I am asking for your prayers in this matter. Hopefully it will not be costly to repair.

In closing I want to thank everyone for your friendship and support. It really means a lot to me. When I started my assignment here at St. John Berchmans Church and School, there was so much that needed to be done and I did not know where to begin first. After much prayer I asked you to help us do what I felt needed to be done and you responded tremendously. You paid for the repairs and improvements we have done which have made a positive difference in our lives. The air condition and heating systems in the church are practically new, the old main electrical distribution panel has been replaced with a new one, when it rains people no longer have to step in the mud that formed at the sidewalk entrances to the school and church and we now have a new bell system calling us to prayer and worship. You can be justifiably proud of these things and the many more you have accomplished. For all these items I thank you! Have you noticed the beautiful Christmas lights by the church and school? Mr. X is at it again. The rectory and school have also had some free improvements made by people who wish to remain anonymous. For these people and Mr. X, I thank God and ask his blessings on them and their families. All these good things I mentioned have come about as a result of people who are open to God's spirit within them and respond to his call. It saddens and frustrates me when many of our people choose to follow other calls rather than God's. Jesus said, "... by their fruits you will know them." During this Advent Season let us resolve to produce good fruits. The kind of fruits that give glory to God and build a healthy, Christ centered community. I humbly ask your prayers for me that I may have the fortitude to do God's will no matter what challenge comes my way and how difficult it may be. May the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, watch over all of us and keep us in their care.

Remember, God loves you and so do I!

Fr. Rudy T. Carrola, Jr.
Pastor, St. John Berchmans Church & School

