

# JULY NEWSLETTER 2011

## ST. JOHN BERCHMANS CHURCH AND SCHOOL

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

The month of July is traditionally a time when people are away on vacations and are enjoying the summer. It is a time when we take a well deserved rest from the work we have been doing during the other parts of the year. If you are spending the summer at home I hope it will be a restful time for you and if you are traveling, especially on the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend, know I will be praying for your well being and safe return home. The month of June and so far this month has been a terribly hot one. At times I find myself thinking about the people who do not have air conditioning and those who have to work outside. Please keep them in your prayers and pray also for rain, we sure do need it. May this summer be a time of rest and renewal for all of us.

Summer is the time when we try to do as many repairs and maintenance as we can afford. This is the time when our school kids are gone and a lot of our parishioners are away on vacation. These past three weeks we have been able to do several needed projects. In the rectory, the bookkeeper's office has been updated with a coat of fresh paint and a new floor. The lights in the walkway that connect the rectory to the church have been giving us problems for some time now. One was burned out and some of the others were going on and off. This problem has been corrected and now all the lights are working as they should. For some time now the door on the north side of the church has been slamming closed every time it was opened. We have been lucky an elderly person or very young child has not gotten hurt by it. A new door closure has been put in and this potential safety hazard has been eliminated. It is so nice to not hear the door slamming shut and see it closing as it should. In and around the Ace house several things have been done. The kitchen has received a fresh coat of paint, a section of the wooden fence surrounding its back yard that was falling down has been repaired, and one of its air condition units has been fixed. In addition to these things, five old toilets have been replaced with new ones. (The old ones were forty-six years old each) and several of the rusted traps in the sinks have been changed out with new ones. Some of the trees on the south side of the church have been trimmed and in front of the school additional plantings were put in where there was none. The dead plants on the east side of the school have been removed and replaced with new foliage. All of this has improved the appearance of this part of our property. Another thing we have done is fix the broken entrance fence on the Weir Street side of our property. It has been broken for a good while now and we have finally been able to repair it. All of these necessary items have been accomplished because of your financial support. We were able to do these and other things without incurring any debt. For this I thank you. The church ramp is proving to be very elusive. I was hoping to have it done by this month but it does not look like this will be possible. Because it will be built according to standards set out by the Americans with Disabilities Act, there is a lot of things that have to be done before ground is broken. Hopefully this ramp will be finished before school starts in August. As mentioned in last months newsletter, when the ramp is finished our attention will be turned towards constructing a new concession stand and storage area for our CYO program. The buildings they have now are unfit to use. There may be some people grumbling that church money should not be used for this but I totally disagree. The church is not paying the entire construction cost. The CYO organization has been raising money towards this project and they need our assistance to help get this task going. They will continue to do fundraisers until their debt to the church is paid. We are one community and as such it is our duty to help one another when we can. The athletic association provides a tremendous ministry to our young children and these buildings will help them continue their good work. This project is an investment in our youth. Please pray for its success.

The spiritual side of our parish continues to be strong. We are very blessed to have good people in key areas helping us move in the right direction. These individuals are our DRE, Mrs. Rosalinda Rodriguez and the catechist who help her, the ACTS men's, women's, and teen teams, the RCIA team members and those who lead our parish organizations. Our religious formation provides a great service to our kids. The teachers and aids are to be commended for their dedication, patience, and commitment. A new religious education year will be starting soon and we will need more generous persons willing to serve our church as a faith formation volunteer, RCIA team member, catechist and sponsor. As our Lord has said many times, do not be afraid. If you have been thinking about helping out in some way with our religious education program it could mean God is calling you to this ministry. For more information contact Rosalinda Rodriguez at 433-2121 or [rosydre@yahoo.com](mailto:rosydre@yahoo.com).

The ACTS women were on retreat last month and it was a very beautiful experience for all. Many of the women who were on the retreat commented on what a great experience it was for them. Some said it changed their life for the better. Not a single one said it was a waste of their time and they all recommended it highly. This month the teens will be on their retreat and I am sure it will also be a beautiful experience for them. These retreats take a lot of preparation, time and money but they are well worth it. I want to thank everyone who has supported an ACTS fundraiser and I encouraged you to support their future

fundraisers. In doing so, you will help to make good things happen in the lives of many people. If you have not yet gone on a retreat, think about it and make plans to go. You will be glad you did.

This past school year was a good one in terms of academics, student population, and the spiritual and personal growth of our students. I am sure the up-coming school year will be just as gratifying. Right now our pupils and teachers are enjoying their vacations. I hope they are resting and I look forward to the day when they will return. I sure do miss them when they are gone. In the meantime we are now busy getting the building ready for the 2011-2012 school year and building on the successes we have already achieved. Please help us keep our enrollment high by telling everyone you know about our fine school. We are currently taking applications for the 2011-2012 school year. These registration forms may be picked up at the school office or one can call 433-0411 to arrange for an interview and tour. Having a school has been a blessing to me. I thoroughly enjoy the time I get to spend with the kids, their parents, and staff. It is not easy keeping up with the requirements of having a school; it takes a lot of sacrifice, money, and hard work to keep it open but it is well worth it. Some see a school as a big burden and something to avoid at all cost but I do not. I love all our kids and am grateful for the opportunity to instill in them Catholic values. I will do everything in my power to help our school and I respectfully ask everyone in the parish to stand with me in support of it. I would hate to think of how things would be if we did not have our school.

Beginning the first of this month there will be changes in our parish staff. We are losing one part timer and gaining two new ones. Mr. Joey Gutierrez will be our new youth minister, taking the place of Monica Rodriguez who held that position for the past twelve months. Mr. Gutierrez has a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from the University of Hartford, and is currently taking courses for a Masters in Divinity Degree from Oblate School of Theology. He is planning to complete the requirements for this degree in the very near future. Mr. Gutierrez has certifications as a Director of Religious Education, Youth Minister, Level Four Religious Education, and Life Teen Minister. In addition to being our high school youth minister he will also be teaching a bible study class for high school youth, and be in charge of our Confirmation program. He is already preparing his classes for the new school year and has gone over all the topics of each class with me. God willing, if younger kids show an interest in having a youth group, he will be forming a junior high youth group for them next year. If this were not enough he will also be in charge of the music for the Saturday evening masses beginning July 2<sup>nd</sup> and continuing on for the rest of the fiscal year. Mr. Gutierrez brings a lot of experience and enthusiasm to the ministries he will be in charge of. He is looking forward to building our Saturday choir and getting to know our youth. Please keep him and all our youth in your prayers. The other part timer we will be adding to our staff is Mr. Jose Deleon. Mr. Deleon is away this month completing the requirements for a Masters Degree in Liturgy. When he returns on August 7<sup>th</sup> he will be playing the piano for our 10:00am and 12:00 noon mass on that day as well the other Sunday English masses for the rest of the fiscal year. He will also be part of a newly formed liturgical committee which will plan liturgies for major feast and the liturgical seasons. The Holy Mass is the most perfect prayer we can be part of. It brings heaven and earth together in praise of our living God. Mr. Deleon and Mr. Gutierrez are very talented and are looking forward to passing on to us the things they have learned on the liturgy. These are exciting times for our community and I look forward to the direction they will provide.

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, St. John Berchmans Parish is my home. I am happy here and feel that this is where I should be at this time in my life. I am proud of the place I call home and want to do my best to make it as welcoming and pleasant as possible. To this end I am always keeping an eye open for something that needs to be fixed, improved, or replaced and in my mind I'm trying to find a way to get these goals accomplished WITHOUT incurring any kind of debt. I do this because this is our home and I want to do my part to make it the best it can possibly be for our people. It makes me very happy to see improvements made that have a positive effect on our people. Thanks to your generosity of time, talent, and treasure, we have together accomplished a lot but there is still much more to be done. Our school needs a new roof, the church needs new restrooms, pews, and a floor, and new fencing and restrooms are needed in our baseball fields. Along with these big ticket items are a whole lot more smaller items needing to be accomplished. All of this may sound a bit overwhelming and even impossible but I believe there is nothing we cannot accomplish **together**. We are one community, one parish, one family and together we can restore the facilities God has so generously blessed our parish with. I humbly ask for your continual support and I pledge to always give you my best and be accountable to you. You can count on me to be truthful even when the news is not good. I will be on vacation from July 18<sup>th</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>. Our seminarian, Oscar Tello will be here throughout this time to help out with the liturgies. During this time there will be priest coming in for the weekend liturgies and there will be communion services during the week. If there is a death we will have a list of priest ready to help out with the funeral mass and gravesite service. Let us continue to pray for each other. 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.  
St. John Berchmans Church and School