

These are the major construction projects we have planned for this summer

- Refurbish and repaint louvers on the higher part of the steeple.
- Replace the front porch of the Church
- Identify a plan to upgrade the cemetery landscaping and make it easier to maintain
- Replace parking lot (tentative)

How to Obtain a Plenary Indulgence

To refresh everyone's memories, here are the normal conditions for receiving a plenary indulgence:

- It is necessary that the faithful be in the state of grace at least at the time the indulgenced work is completed.
- A plenary indulgence can be gained only once a day. In order to obtain it, the faithful must, in addition to being in the state of grace:
- have the interior disposition of complete detachment from sin, even venial sin;

- have sacramentally confessed their sins;
- receive the Holy Eucharist (it is certainly better to receive it while participating in Holy Mass, but for the indulgence only Holy Communion is required); and
- pray for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff.
- It is appropriate, but not necessary, that the sacramental Confession and especially Holy Communion and the prayer for the Pope's intentions take place on the same day that the indulgenced work is performed; but it is sufficient that these sacred rites and prayers be carried out within several days (about 20) before or after the indulgenced act. Prayer for

the Pope's intentions is left to the choice of the faithful, but an Our Father and a Hail Mary are suggested. One sacramental Confession suffices for several plenary indulgences, but a separate Holy Communion and a separate prayer for the Holy Father's intentions are required for each plenary indulgence.

- For the sake of those legitimately impeded, confessors can commute both the work prescribed and the conditions required (except, obviously, detachment from even venial sin).
- Indulgences can always be applied either to oneself or to the souls of the deceased, but they cannot be applied to other persons living on earth.

St. Patrick Pilgrimage: Doors of Mercy, Prayer, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. John Paul II, and Much More!

JOIN US ON JUNE 9TH!

Join our Old St. Patrick pilgrimage! The bus will leave Old St. Patrick's parking lot promptly at 9am to Blessed Sacrament Cathedral in Detroit.

Your pilgrimage starts on the Cathedral plaza, which concludes by passing through the Holy Doors into the Blessed Sacrament Cathedral. Going through this Holy Door of Mercy makes it possible to receive a plenary indulgence.

Our second stop is The National Shrine of The Little Flower Basilica in Royal Oak. A guided tour will be provided and a stop in the gift shop. We built in time to pray at all the places we visit. Ss. Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Orchard Lake will be our last stop. The seminary has a relic of St. John Paul II and icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa. We will have lunch here and a

gift shop visit.

Cost is \$28/person (bus, lunch, gratuities to basilica guides & driver). Payment is **DUE ON OR BEFORE MAY 23**. Seats will not be reserved without payment.

We hope you can join us! Please make checks payable to OSP with memo "pilgrimage". Mail or stop in: Old St. Patrick Catholic Church, 5671 Whitmore Lk. Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Questions?? Cathie Bays 810-599-3452
ccbays@charter.net or Stacey Campbell 248-721-1799
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Limited space, plan and reserve TODAY!!!
Payment DUE ON OR BEFORE MAY 23

Number of persons _____	X \$	Total Enclosed: _____
Name _____	phone _____	email _____
Name _____	phone _____	email _____
Name _____	phone _____	email _____
Name _____	phone _____	email _____

Check to: Old St. Patrick, (memo ck 'Pilgrimage') Mail to: Old St. Patrick Catholic Church, 5671 Whitmore Lk. Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Can We Know God's Will?

There is a margin of error.

Of course, we can know God's will or at least to a significant degree, we can discern a path that we feel with some confidence God invites us to walk.

Sometimes we are faced with big decisions. Sometimes the decisions are very difficult. Big decisions include our vocation, of course. But at various times throughout our life we can be faced with other life-altering possibilities. Just this past week there was an article in the *Wall Street Journal* about providential movements that changed the course of people's lives. (How do we know what is a "sign" and what isn't?)

Knowing God's will is not just about knowing whether or not we ought to be married or become a religious. It is not only about what God wants us to do for a living. It can even be about how we endure particular circumstances. So knowing God's will is tied to other virtues like wisdom and prudence and love (or charity).

Various saints have written about knowing God's will: St. Alphonsus Ligouri has a short treatise you can find online, St. Ignatius of Loyola of course, is famous for his articulation of the whole process of discernment, St. Francis de Sales, and others have written about God's will.

I have, at various times, offered some principles of discernment right here in the bulletin. These include simple steps that help us be receptive to God in the first place; the basic Christian life.

I was recently talking to a priest friend of mine about knowing God's will. He said something I thought was interesting. He contends that in the vast majority of cases, God will not make things clear with certainty. In his opinion, God guides you to a particular point and then lets you decide one way or another. He personally believes this is because God wants you to take some responsibility for the choices you make. God wants you to be able to look back when things are hard and say, 'yes God led me toward this, but this is also something I freely chose'.

I am not saying I think this applies in every case, but I think it's interesting. I think that there may be different ways to find God's will. It seems to me, however, that there are indeed times when God *is* more insistent on us doing one thing or another. But I still found my friend's perspective interesting.

I read recently about a Delta Force commander who said that in special force military operations, you generally make a decision at the point when you have approximately 70% of the information and indications you think you want. He said waiting for that extra 5 or 10% can lead to losing the opportunity to act effectively. That resonates with the theory of my friend also. You can feel led to things to a degree but it may be the case that God is waiting to find someone willing to act in some cases. The application I am trying to make there is to suggest the place that God allows for human initiative.

What does one do with a margin of error in the matter of discerning God's will? It seems to me that if one is truly motivated by a healthy love of God and others, one can depend on the Lord to be there to help.

I don't intend to be cryptic here. I have been thinking about God's will because of things in my life. But I also write this here because I think that young people ought to consider the nature of God's will. Indeed, God may work differently with different personality types. For example, it seems possible to me that if one is timid, God especially may require some initiative from the timid one to help him grow (again, I am thinking of the timidity that can accompany young people).

We can agree that it is important to seek God's will. Within families, it is one of the important responsibilities for parents. Parents need to have a kind of vision for the family life and culture and most mothers have an instinct for that. Too often, fathers do not take the time to seriously consider in a wider perspective, the unique contributions they can make to strengthen the culture of the family. The health of a family depends on the initiative of the father also in shaping the culture to some degree. The world will fill the vacuum. But I digress.

There are a lot of good things to do in life. But the important thing is for us to do what God wants. One can become a success in the eyes of the world and a

failure in God's eyes. That can happen in any sphere of occupation.

The point I wanted to consider here is the range of certainty that is required to act when it comes to discerning God's will.

In this margin of error, St. Francis de Sales seems to say that God can straighten a crooked path perhaps as long as it is begun for a good reason. For example, citing St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Francis exhorts someone who feels he or she may be called to religious life not to dwell on it too much. Think about it, have a few — not many — conversations about it, but then just jump in and try it. The reason is that it is something commended by the Holy Spirit in the Sacred Scriptures. If you hesitate over doing such a good thing, you give the evil one many opportunities to sow doubts. You will have plenty of time to change your path. There is a margin of error. One measure of God's will is the goodness of the decision. Where is your heart? Is it consistent with the goods of the Gospel?

On the other hand, not every good desire is necessarily from God. That is one part of what makes knowing God's will so difficult.

Last January, Pope Francis spoke about doing God's will. He said that obedience to God is the only path to holiness and the only path to heaven. "Do I pray that the Lord gives me the desire to do his will, or do I look for compromises because I'm afraid of God's will? Another thing: praying to know God's will for me and my life, concerning a decision that I must take now... Praying for the desire to do God's will and praying to know God's will. And when I know God's will, praying again for the third time, to follow it. To carry out that will, which is not my own, it is his will. And all this is not easy."

Pope Francis shows three necessary steps: to desire God's will, to discern God's will and then to pray for the strength to carry it out.

When I am selfish, which is altogether too often, I find that first step necessary — that I must pray to desire God's will.

It is not easy. That is why we find ourselves posing the question: can we know God's will? And, as we have seen, it takes some courage and prayer. Saints show us that we have to try! *May God bless you with peace and love in your heart! — Father Gerald*

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