

MESSAGE FROM FR. TONY: Jesus tells his disciples, that is, all of us, that He is the Vine and we are the branches. Once again He uses something familiar to His audience to explain a deeper truth.

If you ever have an opportunity to visit a vineyard, this will make more sense to you.

In the winter, the vines are completely pruned of old, dead, useless branches. That way, the main plant is able to survive because it retains its life essence and can remain alive. If the vine grower does not prune them, they will wither and die. In the same way, Jesus says that the Lord prunes the vines, even the fruitful ones, to increase their productivity.

The way to be a fruitful Christian is to remain close to Jesus. We do this by:

1. Going to Mass. The Bishop will likely lift the dispensation about Mass attendance soon. It is great to see the Masses filled again, but we need to get off the sofa and back to church. For those who can't, we will continue to live stream.
2. Prayer: the "Energy Drink" of the Christian. No matter how you pray, keep on praying.
3. Reading God's Word. A good place to start, or continue, is with the daily Mass readings. They can be found on the USCCB website, along with videos to open up the Word, or in devotional booklets.

Finally, there are no "lone wolf" Christians. If we are not joined to the Vine with other believers, we will be cast out and burnt up as so much dead wood.

Our life is found in Jesus in the company of believers as together we strive to be fruitful. To be fruitful is to be alive and healthy, constantly being pruned by the Master. Fr. Tony

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CANOPY: Please be aware that construction on the new canopy on the front of the church has started. During this time you may need to enter through the handicap entrance on the west side. We apologize for the inconvenience.

2021 GRADUATION MASS 2021: Mass to celebrate parish graduates is scheduled for May 9, 2021, at the 10:00 A.M. Mass. We are not provided a list of graduates from schools other than I.C. School in Loose Creek. For all other graduates, please call, text or email Lisa Kremer with graduate name, grade and school. If a college graduate, please include degree and any honor achievements. Contact information: Lisa Kremer at 680-5154 or e-mail at lpcece177@gmail.com.
Deadline: Saturday, May 1, 2021.

All graduates will meet at the school cafeteria by 9:40 A.M. and please bring your cap & gown. The graduates and their families are invited to a reception immediately following Mass in the school cafeteria.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Our next Parish Council meeting will be Tuesday, May 4, 2021, at 6:30 PM in the cafeteria.

175TH CELEBRATION: The 175th Committee members met on April 12, 2021, and are moving forward with the celebration this year on Saturday, October 9, 2021. It will start off with a parade at 10:30 and end with a Live Band. We are looking for a Committee Leader for the parade and also anyone who is interested in volunteering throughout the event. If interested, please contact Caleb Bax at cbax@legendsbk.com OR 573-821-1061 for more details.

PICNIC TIME: Loose Creek Picnic will be on **Sunday, June 13, 2021.**

"We are excited to be offering a hybrid parish picnic this year with 2 different options!" We will hold a drive thru BBQ fundraiser at church like we did in 2020 and an "in-person" event at Loose Creek Community Center with the following activities: quilt auction, beer garden, and soda stand, sandwich stand (serving only hamburgers, cheese burgers, pork steak sandwiches and chips), live music from 12:00 – 4:30 PM, raffle and 50/25/25. There will be limited seating on the grounds, feel free to bring your lawn chairs. The picnic packets will be put in back of church on Mother's Day weekend. Please stop by church to pick up the picnic information. If you're not already on the work list and would like to help, please reach out to one of the picnic committee members. **PICNIC COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Jackie Bax 690-1867; Amy Wilbers 690-5422; Jennifer Backes 301-8424; Carter Peters 694-7995; Ashley Atkins 619-6996; Jessica Voss 301-8080, Sharla Buthod 291-3224 and Kevin Thoenen 690-3272. Thank you!

NCYC BBQ FUNDRAISER DRIVE THRU: The NCYC will be having a Pulled Pork BBQ or Cheeseburger Drive Thru. Meal includes: 1 meat, parsley potatoes, baked beans & coleslaw. \$10/meal. Loose Creek Community Center on Sunday May 2. Serving from 2:30 - 6:30. Proceeds go toward the Osage County Youth attending the National Catholic Youth Conference. Dairy or gluten free available upon request.



MEMORIAL DAY MASS @ IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH: There will be a Memorial Day Mass on Monday, May 31, 2021 at 8:00 A.M. at Immaculate Conception Parish. Reception will follow Mass in the school cafeteria. The Veterans and others will meet at the Court House Monument at 10:00 A.M. in Linn. Everyone is welcome.

School NEWS

SCHOOL NEWS: The seventh-grade class began our week with an inspirational prayer service about one of God's most precious gifts; the gift of our families. The seventh-grade challenged all students to do at least five kind and helpful gestures for their parents this week. Even though we only have three weeks left to the school year, our students, faculty, and staff are determined to keep working hard each day to do our best and finish the year strong.

I would like to continue our volunteer staff spotlight by shining on the volunteer services of Brian Stegeman of Mid MO Micro Computers. Brian's expertise is in Information Technology (IT). Brian donates his time to assist us with all of our networking, hardware, software, and internet needs. The technology world changes rapidly and we depend on Brian to keep us up-to-date with the most current and necessary technology. Whenever a major technological question arises or problem occurs, Brian is willing and available to help. He also lends his expertise with our E-Rate funding program by getting bids and managing the paperwork involved. Technology is an extremely specialized field, and we greatly appreciate Brian donating his time and specialized talent. Brian shows us the true meaning of our mission to be a follower of Jesus in faith, knowledge, and service. Many blessings, Ms. Luebbert

SCRIP NEWS: Scrip rebate earned for March were \$608.91. The Scrip Committee will be selling Scrip out of the box the first Wednesday of each month from 5-6 pm in the school computer room. Scrip Sell dates through May: May 5.

Meetings & Events

Boy Scout Troop 76 will be meeting on Monday, May 3, at 6:30-8:00 in the school cafeteria.

Cub Scout Pack will be meeting on Monday, May 17, at 6:30 – 8:00 in the school cafeteria.

OSAGE COUNTY NEEDS: The Osage County Needs collection will be the weekend of May 1-2, 2021. Thank you for your generosity.

IC RECYCLE PROGRAM WEEKEND: Please bring your bagged aluminum cans to the trailer parked next to the gas tanks May 1-2. **Please NO PLASTIC ITEMS. THANKS!**

KC COUNCIL 2027 MEETING: The monthly meeting will be on Tuesday, May 11. Rosary to end abortion at 7:15 PM, meeting at 7:30 PM at the Bonnotts Mill Hall.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS CHICKEN DINNER: The Bonnotts Mill Knights of Columbus Council #2027 is having a Drive Thru **Chicken Dinner on Friday May 14, 2021** at the Loose Creek School/Church Parking Lot. Serving from 4:30 – 7:30. Meal includes: 4 mixed pieces, Bake Potato, Green Beans and Slaw for \$12. Please see flyer in back of church for additional details.

CATHOLIC FINANCIAL LIFE BRANCH: The Catholic Financial Life Branch 1152 will be meeting and breakfast on Tuesday, May 4, 8:00 AM at BJ's Restaurant, Linn.

THANK YOU: Thanks to the people of Immaculate Conception Parish for making the funeral of Ray Backes so special. Starting with Father Rinaldo down to the neighbor boy who, at the cemetery, was directing traffic. Beside the above mentioned, there were the servers, the reader, the communion minister, those who took care of the music, the pallbearers, the men who parked cars and the ladies who prepared a meal. I'm sure Ray would have been very proud. God love you all and maybe someday we can return the favor. Hubert Backes and Ann Williams

PARISH COUNCIL NOMINATIONS: We are looking for nominations for the following areas on the parish council. Below is a list of the areas we are looking at filling. **ADMINISTRATION:** Committees: Budget/Finance, Cemetery Committee, Building & Grounds, Parish Picnic, DPC (Diocesan Pastoral Council). **EDUCATION:** Committees: Public School Religion (PSR), School Board, Adult Education, Confirmation, Sunday school, Vacation Bible School. **SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD:** (Three-year comment for school advisory board.) Reports to Principal and Pastor. The current members: **Fr. Tony Rinaldo, Anne Luebbert** (Principal); **Julie Brandt** (President), **Carol Schaefer** (Social Concerns); **Debby Muenks, Kathy Muenks** (Education); Troy Pinkerton (Vice-President), **Kevin Muenks** (Administration); **Amie Peters** (Secretary), **Lisa Kremer** (Worship & Spiritual Development).