



CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF PEACE

Post Office Box 69 * Fords, New Jersey 08863-0069
Telephone: (732)738-7940 Fax: (732) 738-3848

Summer 2021

Dear Parishioner of Our Lady of Peace,

As summer continues, we should all take a few moments to reflect upon the meaning of this special God-given season and thank Him for it.

Summer often acts like a "Sabbath" for the year. God created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh. Likewise, students and people in the work force work diligently through the year, and summertime provides a period of rest and refreshment after long hours of labor. Although work continues through the summer, many use this season to take a much-needed vacation with family and friends.

School is out for students, but they still continue to learn every day. As parents, who are the primary educators of their children, what lessons have you planned for your children this summer? Perhaps the lesson of sharing and loving our neighbors through swimming pool and beach parties? Perhaps through gathering a group to go to a good movie, and discussing its message and effects on their perceptions? Perhaps taking care of the less fortunate through involvement in a local charity or soup kitchen? Perhaps helping children to delve deeper into their faith.

And what about those of us who are not children? Are we not called to continue to form ourselves in some way over the summer? We can find many ways to continue to grow in this less stressful and restful time of year. We can grow in our appreciation of God's beauty through visiting art exhibits, parks and reserves, or boating on one of the many area lakes and rivers. We can grow in our love of neighbor through volunteering to help the less fortunate, the shut-in and/or the suffering. We can grow in our faith by buying a good spiritual book to take to the beach.

Pope Francis emphasizes the need for vacations and renewal. Several summers ago, he shared these observations. "I invite everyone to make these days of well-deserved summer rest a time of inner enrichment and worthwhile family relaxation. Vacations, holidays, must be wisely used in order to benefit the individual and family through contact with nature, tranquility, the opportunity to foster greater family harmony, good reading and healthy recreational activities; above all, through the possibility of spending more time in prayer, in contemplation and in listening to God."

Summer is a wonderful time of year, and as we embark on this season of picnics, family gatherings and rest, I pray that God will bless each and every one of us with a summer of fun and joy.

May we emerge from this season more rested to do God's work, more committed to serve God's people in our parish by giving more of your time, your God given talents and sacrificial financial generosity.

All in all, we need to be more in love with our God who created and loves us.

May you continue to be a blessing to Our Lady of Peace Parish.

Please be assured of my continued prayers for you and your family.

Devotedly yours in Christ,

Rev. Matthew R. Paratore, S.T.L., J.C.L.
Pastor