

One of the major biographers, George Weigel, called Pope St. John Paul II a “Witness to Joy and Hope.” To the thousands of young people who gathered in Toronto, Canada in 2002 for World Youth Day, John Paul II spoke these words: “Although I have lived through much darkness under harsh totalitarian regimes, I have seen enough evidence to be unshakably convinced that no difficulty, no fear is so great that it can completely suffocate the hope that springs eternal in the hearts of the young. . . Do not let that hope die. Stake your lives on it.” These words help us see why St. John Paul II was a witness to joy and hope. St. John Paul’s hope was grounded in the conviction that the ultimate victory belongs to Christ, a victory he has already won on the cross. It was a hope founded on the promise of Jesus at the Last Supper: “In the world you will have tribulation, but take courage for I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). St. John Paul II lived through the loss of all his family, the horror of the Second World War, Communism, being shot and almost killed, bowel cancer, Parkinson’s disease, and many more trials, yet he never lost faith and hope. For John Paul II, the power that gave him strength to live came from Christ. With Christ, he explained, evil would be overcome and hope would triumph in every place and circumstance. My beloved brothers and sisters, as you see, today’s world desperately needs joy, hope for the future, and pure love. There are worrying signs in our society that people are losing faith, hope, and love; they leave the Church, the holy sacraments, and they stop attending Mass and receiving the Holy Eucharist. People are numbing themselves with drugs, falling into despair, and with alarming frequency, dying through different circumstances. We are constantly tempted to lose hope and faith when confronted with the many challenges we face today—the scourge of demonic racism and a worldwide economic recession. That’s why St. John Paul II sends us to Christ again saying that He has already overcome all things and is still present and active in the world, even through all the passions, pandemics, and social tensions of this age. His love will overcome all evil, darkness, and despair. How can we nurture and share this

***Next Week is the Diocesan Collection for
the Retired Religious***

Dear parishioners, friends and visitors. It's that time again...Christ the King Catholic Church in Latimer will be taking orders for seafood gumbo this Christmas Season!! \$50 for a gallon or \$25 for a half gallon. Sign-up sheets will be in the back of the church in Vancleave and Latimer starting this weekend or you can contact Deacon Norbie or Pam Leach at 228-209-0698 to place your order. The deadline to order is Dec. 14th. Orders can be picked up at Christ The King on Dec. 17th and 18th after Mass.

We will have an Advent Penance Service on Monday, December 19th at 6:00 p.m. for Holy Spirit Catholic Church and Christ the King Mission at Holy Spirit Catholic Church. Three priests will be available to hear your confession.

<i>MASS</i>	<i>LECTOR</i>	<i>Altar Servers</i>
Sat Dec 17 4:00 p.m. CK	Gene Higginbotham	
Sun Dec 17 6:00 p.m. HS	Doris Santa Cruz	
Sun Dec 18 9:15 a.m. CK	Pat Fast	Daniel Yennie
Sun Dec 18 11:00 a.m. HS	Mark Hopkins	Cooper Flurry Addison Smith Brileigh Brown
Sun Dec 18 4:00 p.m. HS	Katherine Rushing	

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS † PLEASE FILL OUT A NEW MEMBER REGISTRATION FORM AND SUBMIT IT TO THE PARISH OFFICE (OR DROP IT IN THE OFFERTORY BASKET). THE FORMS ARE LOCATED IN THE FRONT OF THE CHURCH.