

From My Rectory Window...



The summer is flying by and before you know it we will be staring September in the face. It's the nature of life, but it surely can be disconcerting, especially when we get a little older, and often think of the "last round up". Our beautiful Feast of the Assumption of Our Blessed Mother, which we just celebrated this past week is a wonderful reminder of our ultimate goal in life which is to "be happy forever in Heaven" as the old catechism answer goes. I always love to see the traditional devotion of the congregation especially when it is a great Blessed Mother feast as this was. I think that the flowers really enhanced this great festival as blue is the color of Heaven. Many thanks to Mrs. Debbie Milecki who spent most of Monday preparing the wonderful arrangements. The predominating color for this feast was blue. In the Old Testament Temple, the great veil of the Holy of Holies was embroidered in blue, with purple and gold woven in. This was also the colors worn by the Priests and Levites. It was considered a sacred color and so it is appropriate that we usually picture the Holy Virgin veiled in blue as a reminder that the power of the Most High had overshadowed her as the Archangel indicated at the moment of the Annunciation. While the Latin or Roman Rite of the Church does not use solidly blue vestments (except in some Spanish or Latin American countries), it certainly makes use of it to enhance and identify the theme of the feast day. Happily, many of you wore "something blue" to Mass as a sign of real "team spirit". We truly attempted to bestow honor on the "one who is blessed among all women". The Assumption is certainly my favorite Marian feast and I believe it is the oldest. Later on, this month on the 22nd we will conclude the "eight days" or octave of this feast with the Queenship (or coronation) of Our Lady. By the way there will be a special rosary and devotions on that day at 4:00 P.M. in the Chapel. We used to have an outdoor procession around the grounds, but as the devotees were of advanced age groupings and the temperature is very often terribly humid and hot, the Procession now takes place inside the Chapel during the Rosary. Everything concluding with Eucharistic Benediction. Our Father Evarist and Deacon Jerry Purcell will lead the congregation. I will be leading our Altar servers and some of their parents and other parishioners on a trip to "Sight and Sound" to see the production of "Jesus". This is a treat which we offer to our faithful Altar Servers for being so devoted to serving Mass and devotions. Hopefully we will be adding to their number as the year goes on. Folks, always encourage the youngsters to give that special time to the Lord in this special ministry for the Parish. We are closer to completing the renovation (on the "St. Joseph's side") of the confessional so that it will be a more senior friendly place to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance; brighter, more spacious and comfortable. A special Thank You to two of our Parishioners who have donated towards the new statue of our Patroness St. Elizabeth Ann Seton on the Campus of All Saints Regional Parochial School. There will be such a statue sculpted to honor each of the other "sending Parishes": St. Pius X in Forked River, St. Theresa in Little Egg Harbor, St. Mary's in Barnegat and St. Francis on Long Beach Island. We hope to raise \$10,000.00 for each statue. The donations from our Parish have thus far amounted to \$2,000.00 and I believe there is more coming. Many thanks on behalf of the parochial school youngsters and the All Saints Community. Hopefully we will reach the goal to finance this image for the edification of many for years to come. Unfortunately, lately some "**visiting folks**" and some young children have taken to being present in the parking lot after Saturday or Sunday Masses carrying signs indicating that they are poor/hungry and so on. They have been seen in other parishes across the Diocese and even in other Churches; while we really strive to do a great deal to assist those who legitimately are down and out with our various organizations such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society etc. I do not recommend any such group that simply arrives to quickly collect funds and at a signal disappears when Parish or civil authorities are called only to show up at some other place of worship to do the same thing. It is a nuisance, and I wanted to warn you so that your good-hearted nature would not be taken advantage of. I could regale you with stories when I was a young Priest in my first assignment years ago when such individuals would arrive and it was only later that I discovered that the same thing happened down the road in another Parish. There is nothing like experience to teach you. Always send them to me should they approach you. Believe me they won't stay. The summer weeks are moving along, let us take advantage of the beauty of the season just to enjoy and appreciate God's good earth. Be well: Peace and all good things. Your Pastor and servant:
Fr. Pat Papalia