

Growing up, my family used to play a game on long car rides called, “I’m going on a picnic.” It was a guessing game of sorts in which, through a series of exchanges between the leader of the picnic and the guests coming to it, the players would try to figure out the leader’s hidden conditions as to what items were allowed or not. You’d say something like, “I’m going on a picnic, and I am bringing “yogurt” as well as “milk” and “cheese” and because the leader told you yes to these items and no to “juice” and “a baseball” you figured out that you could only bring dairy items to this affair. Maybe you played a game like this with your family or friends. In any event, for us kids, this game sharpened our thinking and attending skills and kept our minds occupied on something other than, “are we there yet” for which I think Mom and Dad were grateful for. But the best thing about these imaginary picnics we would go on is that they brought our family together. I look back at something as uninteresting as a long car ride and think of them as fond memories and time well spent.

There are many good reasons for going on a picnic. Whereas many of us spend so much time indoors or in front of a screen, it gets us out and about and into God’s creation. Whereas many of us are pulled in different directions for varying activities and don’t have the time to eat together even, a picnic is set aside specifically for the purposes of undivided time of being together and sharing life together with the people we love and care about. Whereas many of us take ourselves and the matters of this world too seriously, a picnic is generally a more carefree affair reconnecting us with the joy that God wants us to experience. Maybe we would approach life differently if there were more picnics in our lives.

This coming weekend July 27th is our annual Family of Parishes Summer Picnic. “I’m going on a picnic, and I’m bringing...”

- **MASS**: God is coming to our picnic. On Sunday, there will be an outdoor Mass at 10:30am. Note that the regular 9:30am Mass at IC and 10:00am Mass at St. Peters are cancelled in favor of this outdoor Mass this weekend so to bring us together.
- **GAMES**: There will be games for the kids, which means free time for the adults!
- **FOOD AND DRINK**: Many of us are bringing our own favorite dishes to pass, along with desserts. Water and Pop along with Hot Dogs and Hamburgers and Italian Sausage will be provided. If you go hungry it’s your own fault.
- **GARAGE SALE**: Someone’s old stuff might be your new treasure! This is a good way to rummage and dream together, perhaps pick up something you could use, and support the Rosary Altar of Immaculate Conception’s fundraiser at the same time.
- **YOU**: I’m going on a picnic and I’m bringing my parish family. And you are welcome to bring your family and friends besides. Going on a picnic is time well spent. We love our Church and our faith community – let’s keep our parishes vibrant and our community alive and strong. Thanks for helping us and joining us at the picnic once again this year. See you there!

Peace,

~Fr. Luke