EPIPH ANY CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 30, 2022



4th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



"Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." - Luke 4:21

Vision Statement: "To offer every person in our community a life-changing encounter with Jesus."

POPE FRANCIS

The Lovers, the Dreamers, and Me



Pope Francis has [often] spoken about the love of God.

But he has not spoken of a generic love for human beings, nor of theological concepts regarding divine love, but rather of God's love for each one of us, of His love for me, in this moment.

The Pope repeats this continually: God seeks you, precisely you! God always precedes you, always arrives first. And

He waits for you like the father of the Prodigal Son, and He embraces you in whatever situation you are in, as you are, full of limitations, in your sin.

It is a total love, a gratuitous love, one that fills your heart and relaunches you in life, and that no one can give to you except God. And the thought of a God so in love with you moves your heart, because you cannot imagine a love so great and so beautiful for you! Only by means of this experience of mercy do you begin to love yourself and to realize that, even in your littleness, you too can embrace the people around you in a new way, renewed by His loving presence.

Certainly you can always choose to believe or not to believe this, in this chance even if only glimpsed for an instant that presents itself to you and knocks on the door of your heart, because love does not impose itself, never obliges the other to say "yes."

But if you are already full from all that you do and or all that you have in life, and you do not look inside to see that need for the infinite that is inscribed in your heart, only with difficulty will you be able to see and to find something other than yourself. You will have already decided what is better for you, and eliminated the category of everything that does not depend on your own hands and your own will.

But, precisely in the most diverse circumstances that occur in life — certainly not by chance! — one receives the grace to verify that, if one begins to yield to His initiative and leaves space for "something Other" that one was seeking beneath all things and all relationships, one begins to sense that Christ corresponds to the infinite longing of one's own heart and renders all of life greater and more beautiful. If one allows oneself to be surprised and does not close the doors of one's heart, like an infant in the arms of its mother, one may begin to utter a timid "yes" before that newness of life one has

glimpsed, and precisely on this timid "yes" the Lord begins to build.

We are the "dream of God" who, truly in love, wants to change our life. Through love. He only asks us to have faith to let Him do so. And thus we can only cry for joy before a God who recreates us, says Pope Francis.

In a passage from Isaiah (65:17-21), the Lord tells us that He creates new heavens and a new earth, that is, "He re-creates things," Francis explains, also recalling that "we have spoken many times of these 'two creations' of God: the first, which was done in six days, and the second, when the Lord 're-makes' the world, destroyed by sin, in Jesus Christ." And, he emphasized, "we have said so many times that this second is more marvelous than the first." Indeed, the pontiff explains, "the first is already a marvelous creation; but the second, in Christ, is even more marvelous."

In his meditation, however, Francis pauses "on another aspect," beginning from the passage of Isaiah in which "the Lord speaks about what He is going to make: a new heaven, a new earth." And "we find that the Lord has much enthusiasm: He

speaks of joy and says a word: 'I will rejoice in my people.'" Essentially, "the Lord thinks about what He is going to do, He thinks that He, He Himself will rejoice with his people." Thus, "it is as if it were a 'dream' of the Lord, as if the Lord 'were dream-

Before I formed you in the womb

I knew you,

Before you were born

I dedicated you.

- Jeremiah 1:5 -

ing' of us: how beautiful it will be when we are all together."

Further clarifying his rationale, Francis returns to "a metaphor that can help us understand: it is as if a young woman with her boyfriend, or a young man with his girlfriend, were to think: 'When we are together, when we get married...'" Thus, "God's 'dream': God thinks about each one of us, loves us, dreams of us, dreams of the joy that He will rejoice with us." And this is why "the Lord wants to 're-create us,' to make our hearts new, to 're-create' our heart in order to make joy triumph."

All this led the Pope to ask a few questions: "Have you ever thought: the Lord dreams about me? He thinks about me? I am in the mind, in the heart of the Lord? The Lord is capable of changing my life?" Isaiah also tells us, Francis adds, that the Lord "makes many plans: 'We will build houses, plant vine-yards, and eat together': all those plans typical of one in love." After all, "the Lord shows Himself enamored of His people," even going so far as to say, "I did Continued on Last Page

GOSPEL MEDITATION

THE POWER OF GOD AT WORK

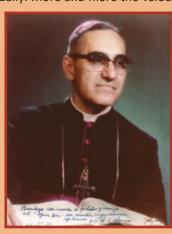


St. Oscar Romero (1917-1980) was a "Salvadoran Roman Catholic archbishop who was a vocal critic of the violent activities of government armed forces, right-wing groups, and leftist guerrillas involved in El Salvador's civil conflict (Encyclopedia Britannica)." As a voice of the voiceless, he was an outspoken champion of the poor who were the ones most affected by the civil unrest and violence. His advocacy provoked several attempts on his life. Nonetheless, St.

Oscar Romero was convinced that before all else his faith in the resurrected Christ and the values of the Gospel trumped any earthly concern or worry. He walked with complete confidence and trust. On March 24, 1980, St. Oscar Romero was assassinated while celebrating Mass. Such is often the fate of those who challenge the socio-political agendas of the day.

We may look at the example of witness of St. Oscar Romero as something extraordinary. In one sense it is. Through the power of God, an ordinary human being did extraordinary things. But, in and of himself, St. Oscar Romero was simply a humble, loving servant of God. Oscar knew not only the power of love but the risk that comes when loving unconditionally. The beauty of God's message was able to shine in and through him because he was able to step out of the way and be a vessel. One can assume that for St. Oscar Romero, one's earthly life has no merit when faith, integrity, conviction, zeal and love are jettisoned. Fear and apprehension had no grip on this man who not only saw but spoke the truth.

Do we speak the truth? It makes us feel good to speak of God as love. But have we ever considered the ramifications of this radical message? There are assaults on human life occurring daily. More and more the value and worth of a human being is



being reduced and minimalized. We are becoming widgets in the production of life. In our whole simple humble ways, we too are called to be prophets. Knowing who you are and what is within your means to do, how can you make God's love real, stand up for what is right, and give witness to the sacredness of all that is around you? —LPI

CELEBRATING OUR FAITH

SACRAMENTS SCHEDULE

Mass Schedule

Incense is used at 9:30am Sunday Mass. Ministers have Glutenfree Hosts. 7:30 am Sunday Mass is Broadcast on Facebook at Epiphanyparish.com, with drive up Communion till 8:30am (Canopy). *Masks Required at 2 Masses.

Sunday, January 30, 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30am* John Heller 9:30am Kimberly Dietz 11:30am* People of the Parish

Monday, Jan. 31, Saint John Bosco, Priest

7:00am Charles Jensen Lector: Kara Esker EME: Deb Willenborg

Tuesday, Feb. 1, Weekday

7:00am Bill and Nancy Marshall 8:15am J. Michael Hayes Lector: Kris Angles EME: Dorothy Meier

Wednesday, Feb. 2, The Presentation of the Lord

7:00am Raymond Mickelson 8:15am Ella and Paul Bethea

Lector: Chris Niebur EMEs: Lynda Arnold, Ed & Newze Nnakwe

Thursday, Feb. 3, St. Blaise, Bishop and Martyr

7:00am Kathy Albee

8:15am Taimooraz Taimoorazi Lector: Jennifer Kamradt EME: Darly Menke

Friday, Feb. 4, Weekday

7:00am Margo Schmitt

Lector: Mathew and Katrina Kinate EME: Aggie Hatch

Saturday, Feb. 5, Blessed Virgin Mary

7:30am All Souls' Day Memorial Society 4:00pm Thomas C. Van Deven (liv.)

Lector: Steve G. EME: Barb Burdett, Mary C. & Keith Walljasper

Sunday, February 6, 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30am* Margo Schmitt

9:30am Jon, Steve and Dave Perl 11:30am* People of the Parish

Confession Times

7:30am **M-F** 7am,3pm **SAT** 7am,9am,11am **SUN**

PARISH UPDATES

Epiphany Youth Ministry

High School Youth Group - The next two weekends, January 30th and February 6th, we have our regular youth group on Sunday evening from 6:30-89pm in The Crib (previously the convent/pre-k/art/music room). Come out for some fun, games, and meaningful discussion! All are welcome!

Not getting our emails? Sign up by emailing kara.esker@epiphanypar ish.com

Catholic Heart Work Camp is a weeklong summer mission trip for teens - you'll work tirelessly, think deeply, celebrate Mass, and build relationships. You'll dance, laugh till your side hurts, pray, change on the inside, and be part of transforming lives and communities for Christ! 8th graders and up are invited to join us in Memphis TN from June 12th-18th for Catholic Heart Work Camp. Contact Kara (kara.esker@epiphanyparish.com) for the registration link! Deadline to register is February 15th!

Junior High Youth Group is open to all 6-8th graders and meets once a month. Our next Junior High Youth Group is Friday, February 11th from 7-8:30pm. This month we'll meet in the small gym in the elemtary school to hang out, have fun, and grow in faith together!

Date Night with Nick and Kari Becker

What is the one thing your kids need to know? What is the one thing your kids need to know?? Come find out and learn from decades of parenting experience. Friday, February 11th from 6:30-8:00 in the Parish Hall. Seating is limited to sign up on the website today. Contact Stephanie.Demboski@epiphanyparish.com for details.

Young at Heart Needs You!

Young at Heart has an opening for a representative from Epiphany to serve on the Board of Directors. Duties include attending 3-4 Board meetings a year, assisting at events as hosts, and planning the year's calendar. Young at Heart is open to everyone 50 years young and older. The purpose of the group is to foster fellowship among older adults within the parishes of the Bloomington/Normal area. YAH sponsors spiritual activities, dinners, and entertainment and educational opportunities. Please call Mary-Margaret McHugh at 309-452-7976 for more information.

Young at Heart Celebrates Valentine's Day

Celebrate Valentine's Day! Join us for lunch at the Olive Garden, Veteran's Parkway and Empire, Bloomington, on February 14, 2022. Seating will begin at 11:30am. You will order off the menu. Come enjoy a delicious meal and conversation with friends. Young At Heart is open to everyone 50 years young and older for the purpose of fellowship among older adults. Reservations: Call Mary-Margaret at 309-452-7976.

Catholic Spirit Radio Pilgrimage

Join Catholic Spirit Radio for a Lenten Pilgrimage on Saturday, March 12th. The all-inclusive trip provides charter bus transportation from Normal to Princeville and Peoria. We will visit the Community of Saint John for a Lenten talk, Adoration, Confession, Mass and lunch; the Archbishop Fulton Sheen Museum & Gift Shop; a talk on Sheen by

Katie Bogner, followed by her book sale; Sheen's Tomb at the Cathedral; and dinner at Obed & Isaac's. Register by February 7th for \$140 or by February 19th for \$155 at catholicspiritradio.com. For questions, contact Pam at (217) 855-4418 or elliottbus@gmail.com.

Small Group Opportunity: History of Black Catholics

The history of Black Catholics in the United States is replete with stories of devotion, perseverance, and unfortunately, also exclusion. During Black History Month, consider joining a group of 8-10 parishioners to discuss Father Cyprian Davis, O.S.B.'s book "The History of Black Catholics in the United States." The group will meet on the four Thursdays in February at 7:00 PM in the Cenacle Room. There is no fee and the book will be provided free of charge. To participate, email Joe Blaney ASAP: jrblane@ilstu.edu.

Small Group Opportunity: Sowers of the Seed

Come join for a ONE TIME Small Group on the Sower and the Seeds! Masks are required. Pat Luber will lead us through this parable and teach things we've never heard. It's amazing what we can learn from the Bible. Join us to find out at 6:30 PM on Thursday, February 24th in the Cenacle Room. RSVP on the website.

Carmelite Spirituality Group

Do you desire a community of likeminded people who will support each other in prayer as you live out the Carmelite Charism in the world? Then perhaps God may be calling you to become a Third Order Lay Carmelite. If you are 18 years or older, and a Catholic in good standing, you are invited to attend the Carmelite Spirituality Group. The next Group will be held on Saturday, February 5th, at 10AM-12PM in the parish hall of Historic St. Patrick's Catholic Church, located at 1209 Locust St. in Bloomington, Illinois. Please contact / RSVP - Lorrie Schmidt T.O.C. (Third Order Carmelite) at: LittlewayofCarmel @gmail.com

Qualified Charitable Distribution from an IRA

Individuals age 70½ and older can make distributions up to \$100,000 a year to non-profit (501c3) organizations, such as your parish and Catholic school directly through their IRA *at any time*. Contact the custodian of your IRA for a list of the necessary steps.



SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Funeral Committee Volunteers Needed

We are resuming funeral luncheons, but we need YOU! Serving on the Funeral Committee is a concrete way to provide comfort to grieving families when a loved one is lost. There are a variety of ways you can help: donate desserts, set up the parish hall, help during lunch, or clean up. Committee members are not committed to help with every funeral lunch. To join the Funeral Committee, contact Suzanne Ferrara at sferra@ilstu.edu or join the Funeral Committee on Flocknote.

Faith in Action News

Faith in Action is Charleston Bound this spring from April 3-9th! For all the details of this **bus trip**, visit https://bnfia.org/charleston-sc-bus-trip or call Jan at 309.827.7780. Book by Jan. 27, 2022! In addition, are you ready to brighten an older adult's day? With Faith in Action, **volunteer drivers**, shoppers and friendly visitors choose when and how often they volunteer. To register for Volunteer Orientation, email Stacey@bnfia.org or call (309) 827-7780. Upcoming dates: Jan. 4, 2022 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM, Feb. 1, 2022 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Writing Opportunity

Are you looking to exercise your creative writing skills? Want to be published on a monthly basis? Epiphany Church is looking for a volunteer to create a monthly newsletter for the parish. This newsletter would include a calendar of all events and help spotlight what opportunities are available as well as what various ministries are doing at the parish. Information to be published will be provided to you, but we need help creating an engaging, visually appealing manner of delivering this information to people's inboxes.

BULLETIN EDITOR OUT SICK

We're so sorry if you submitted something that didn't make it into the bulletin this week. Anything that needs out urgently can be posted on our Facebook page by contacting it.director@epiphanyparish.com. Thank you!

OUR DEARLY DEPARTED GRANT ETERNAL REST TO THEM, O LORD!



Patricia Houlihan, 1937-2022, wife of Fran and mother of Kathleen Janke, born 1960, followed by Mary in 1962, Maureen in 1964 and Aileen in 1973.

PARISH CONTACTS

Parish Office

(309)452-2585 Epiphanyparish.com

School Office

(309)452-3268 Epiphanyschools.org

Fr. Eric Powell (Pastor)
pastor@epiphanyparish.com
309-660-7860

Deacon Mark Cleary (Baptisms) mcleary08@comcas t.net 309-531-1062

Fr. Peter O. Okola, AJ (Vicar) Fr.Peter@epiphanyparish.com 703-626-8819

Kara Esker (Youth Ministry, CCD) kara.esker@epiphanyparish.com

Stephanie Demboski

(Adult Faith Formation & Evangelization Coordinator) stephanie.demboski@epiphanyparish.com

Domine King, Joyce Tellman (Office Staff) office@epiphanyparish.com

Angie O'Connor

business.manager@epiphanyparish.com

Mike Essington (IT) it.director@epiphanyparish.com

Spiritual Directors:

Sylvia Hernandez sylviahernandez50@gmail.com Deacon Mark Cleary mcleary08@comcast.net

Parish Outreach

If you find yourself in serious economic need, Epiphany Parish and St. Vincent de Paul want to help. Email Orlando Lopez our Outreach coordinator: outreach@epiphanyparish.com.

SHARING THE MISSION THANK YOU!

Gifts from Our Parish Family January 23, 2022 \$16,948 E-giving \$6,784 Special \$865 Parish Endowment \$265 School \$480 Capital Improvement \$120 Weekly Budget \$24,500 YTD Budget (30 weeks) \$735,000 YTD Income \$716,041 YTD Balance (\$18,959)

not choose you because you are the strongest, the biggest, the most powerful; but I chose you because you are the least of all." Moreover, "it could be said: the poorest of all. I chose you like this, and this is love."

The Pope indicates that "this will of the Lord continues, this desire of His to change our life. And we are able to say, if we hear this invitation of the Lord: 'You have changed my mourning into dancing,' which are the words that we prayed in Psalm 29. 'I will praise you, Lord, you have rescued me,' the Psalm also says, thereby acknowledging that the Lord is capable of changing us

through love: He is in love with us."

"I don't believe any theologian can explain this: it cannot be explained," Francis remarks. Because this is something "we can only reflect on, feel and cry for joy: the Lord can change us." He then asks spontaneously: What do I have to do? The answer is simple: "Believe.

Believe that the Lord can change me, that He can."

Faith, Francis explains "is giving space to this love of God; it is making room for the power, for the power of God, for the power of One who loves me, who is in love with me and who wants this joy with me. This is faith. This is believing: it is making room for the Lord to come and change me."

Truly, Francis says "the Lord can change us, He wants to change us, He loves to change us. And this, through love." And He only asks us for "our faith: in other words, to give space to His love so it may act and bring about a change of life in us."

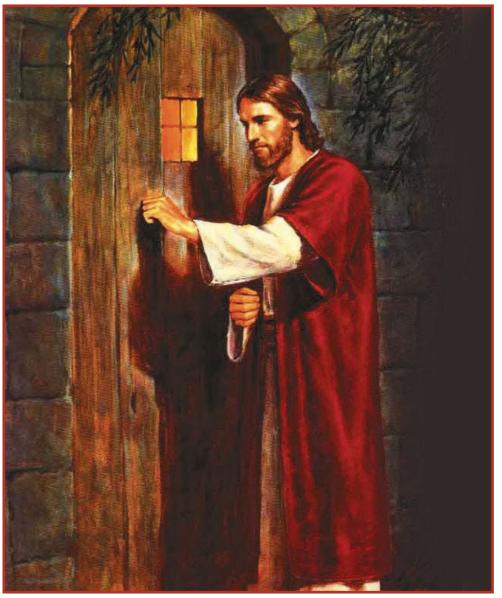
-Taken from L'Osservatore Romano, "The Words of Pope Francis"

2021 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Please tear out, fill out and return this document if you would like to receive a statement of your contributions to Epiphany Parish. Return it to the parish office, or place it in the collection basket on your way into church. Email Option: fill in all lines, but print your email address clearly below.

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Tuition Statements can be obtained by logging in to your FACTS account and printing a 2021 summary. Contact Angie in the Business Office with questions.





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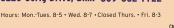
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