

ST. THOMAS INDIAN MISSION

6th Sunday
in Ordinary Time, B
February 14, 2021

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**Fr. George "of the desert" Decasa
Pastor**

**Our Sunday Masses are now held inside the Church,
on Saturdays at 4:30 PM and on Sundays at 9:30 AM. Please come in a face mask
and observe social distancing (6 ft. between people of different households).**

1st Reading:

Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "If someone has on his skin a scab or pustule or blotch which appears to be the sore of leprosy, he shall be brought to Aaron, the priest, or to one of the priests among his descendants. If the man is leprous and unclean, the priest shall declare him unclean by reason of the sore on his head.

"The one who bears the sore of leprosy shall keep his garments rent and his head bare, and shall muffle his beard; he shall cry out, 'Unclean, unclean!' As long as the sore is on him he shall declare himself unclean, since he is in fact unclean. He shall dwell apart, making his abode outside the camp."

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm:

"I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation."

Blessed is he whose fault is taken away, whose sin is covered. Blessed the man to whom the LORD imputes not guilt, in whose spirit there is no guile.

R.

Then I acknowledged my sin

to you, my guilt I covered not. I said, "I confess my faults to the LORD," and you took away the guilt of my sin.

R.

Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you just; exult, all you upright of heart.

R.

2nd Reading:

1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1

Brothers and sisters, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. Avoid giving offense, whether to the Jews or Greeks or the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in every way, not seeking my own benefit but that of the many, that they may be saved.

Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

The Word of the Lord.



Lector: Alleluia, alleluia.

All: Alleluia, alleluia.

Lector: A great prophet has arisen in our midst. God has visited his people.

All: Alleluia, alleluia.

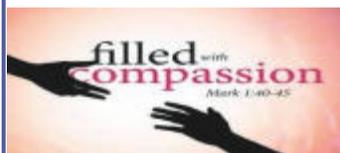
Gospel: Mark 1:40-45

A leper came to Jesus and kneeling down begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean." The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then, warning the him sternly, he dismissed him at once.

He said to him, "See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them."

The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.

The Gospel of the Lord.



ACCLAMATION:

Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection, you have set us free.

**Next Wednesday,
Feb. 17th, is**

Ash Wednesday



*Remember that you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.*

ECCLESIASTES 3:20

**Our Ash Wednesday
Mass, with distribution
of Ashes, will be at
4:30 PM.**



Ash Wednesday is one of two yearly days of obligatory fasting and abstinence, along with Good Friday.

Fasting:

When fasting, a person (age 18 until 59) is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal.

Abstinence:

Persons 14 years of age and older must abstain from meat and items made with meat.

ABSTINENCE



REFLECTING ON THE WORD . . . GUIDEPOSTS

SIGNS OF GOD'S COMPASSIONATE LOVE

What does Christ's cure or healing really mean? We know very well that Jesus did not cure all the deaf and the mute and the lepers of his time.

It is important to remember in reading about the miracles of Jesus that the gospel writers call them "signs." They are signs of God's compassionate love for us. This is the reason Jesus instructs the leper to keep quiet about this whole matter lest he be misunderstood as a miracle worker and not the Messiah, the Son of God who can suffer and die for love of us, for our salvation. If people embrace Jesus only because he can cure physical illness or can grant us what we want in this world, then such a religion is hardly different from that of the pagans. Thus, we can understand why, at the end of his life, at his crucifixion, when he was powerless to human eyes, Jesus did not forbid the centurion from saying, "Truly, he is the Son of God, the Messiah."

The essence of true Christian religion is faith and trust in God, such that our relationship with him can be described as ABBA, that is, a complete trust and confidence in him no matter what happens, a relationship that brings about in us an inner peace, the kind of peace that the world cannot give. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, "To be a Christian is not an ethical choice but an event, that is, the encounter with the Lord Jesus."

Today's scripture passages ought to make us a bit uncomfortable. Of course, if we listen to them as mere historical documents about a disease we never encounter, they may leave us unmoved, or, at most, they may make us regard the COVID-19 as its present-day counterpart. But the issue they raise is not about leprosy in itself. The issue is how we respond to those who are excluded from normal society.

Lepers in Jesus' day were required by Jewish law (see the first reading) to segregate themselves from society. They could not live in town, could not associate with non-lepers, could not worship with the community.

So, what about us today? Who are the outcasts from our society? Few people today are excluded by laws (though prisoners would fit that description) but many are excluded by social rejection and other dynamics that let them know they are not welcome in certain circles and maybe not in certain churches.

May today's readings move us to pray for all people in the whole world, especially those who are treated as "lepers" today because of racism, economic inequality, or any kind of injustice.

As we gather on this last Sunday before Lent, we are challenged by St. Paul to do everything for the glory of God. Further, he urges us to work for the common good rather than our own. May such selflessness be the fruit of our coming Lenten season.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

CELEBRANT:

Our Lord Jesus welcomed the outcasts, touched the untouchables, loved the unlovable. Let us reach out in prayer toward those we often fail to remember.

LECTOR:

1) Let us remember those who live in remote areas of the world; those from small places whose suffering is ignored; those whose pain is not mentioned in the headlines. For the forgotten . . . *we pray.*

2) Let us remember those who go unnoticed by teachers and ministers and employers; for those who do their duty and remain obscure; for those who are shy; for those who are afraid to ask for help; for those who long to be included . . . *we pray.*

3) Let us remember those who live on the margins: for those who do not do well in school; for those who cannot keep up with others, *we pray.*

4) Let us remember those who have fallen on hard times: for those who have lost jobs, homes, the means of caring for those they love . . . *we pray.*

5) Let us remember those who are sick or infirm or elderly and confined to home or bed. For those who cannot come to worship; for those who are lonely; for those who have no one to whom they can tell their stories, *we pray.*

6) Let us pray for all married couples, that they may grow in God's love and be signs of Christ's selfless love for their families, their friends, and each other, *we pray.*

CELEBRANT:

Loving God, grant us the prayers we make through your Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Please pray for God's blessing on Steven Goetz, Alicia (Miguel) Miller, — for their recovery from illness.

Please pray for God's blessing of eternal life on +Aubree, +Julio Somoza, Sr., and +Max Saldana.





World Marriage Day began in 1983 and is celebrated every second Sunday of February in dioceses across the country. This year it falls on February 14, coinciding with Valentine's Day.

The purpose of World Marriage Day is to highlight the beauty of marriage and to honor husbands and wives for their faithfulness and sacrifices.

This year, World Marriage Day, observed annually on the second Sunday of February, will be celebrated Feb. 14, which also is the feast of St. Valentine and which since the eighth century has been a celebration of love and affection.

In the United States, National Marriage Week leads up to World Marriage Day and this year's theme for the weeklong observance, which began Feb. 7, is "To Have, To Hold, To Honor." The theme was chosen "to highlight how married couples live and renew their wedding promises daily in the building up of the domestic church in their homes, particularly as many couples and families have spent more time at home together this year."

The USCCB offers resources to Catholics for the promotion and defense of marriage as a lifelong union of one man and one woman through its dedicated websites ForYourMarriage.org, PorTuMatrimonio.org, and MarriageUniqueForAReason.org.

WHO IS ST. VALENTINE?

St. Valentine of Rome lived and ministered as a priest during the reign of the Roman Emperor Claudius, in the early 200s. Claudius began to understand that single soldiers fought more vigorously and valiantly than married soldiers, that is, they were willing to die more readily for the Empire. So, he made it illegal for young men to get married.

In direct violation of the Emperor's edict, Valentine performed clandestine marriage rites for the young couples. That's how he came to be a patron of young lovers. For these illegal, but Christ-centered acts, Valentine was martyred in about the year A.D. 269.

St. Valentine was not simply a patron of *romance* in the way we think of it today. He was committed to uniting young men and women in the Christian understanding of marriage: one man and one woman, until death do they part. He was a priest of the Catholic Church, and he was martyred for his faith in the Lord, and for his commitment to Christian love and marriage. Even if we are to celebrate St. Valentine, we should do so from this angle.

In 1969, as one of the effects of the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church implemented an update liturgical calendar. The new calendar removed the celebration of St. Valentine's feast day because there was so little that could be accurately known about his life (although still celebrated in the Extraordinary Form).

A REMINDER RE CORONA VIRUS:

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person, typically through respiratory droplets from coughing, sneezing, or talking.

Airborne transmission is infection spread through exposure to those virus-containing respiratory droplets comprised of smaller droplets and particles that can remain suspended in the air over long distances (usually greater than 6 feet) and time (typically hours).

Also, it may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

When should I quarantine for the coronavirus disease?

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more.
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- You had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them), even for a few seconds.
- You shared eating or drinking utensils.

Do I still need to quarantine after I tested negative for COVID-19 but was exposed to someone who has COVID-19?

Yes. You should still self-quarantine for 14 days since your last exposure. It can take up to 14 days after exposure to the virus for a person to develop COVID-19 symptoms.

A negative result before end of the 14-day quarantine period does not rule out possible infection.

By self-quarantining for 14 days, you lower the chance of possibly exposing others to COVID-19.

The best way to protect yourself and others is to stay home for 14 days if you think you've been exposed to someone who has COVID-19.



COLLECTIONS:

Jan. 30, 2021: \$ 496

Feb. 6-7, 2021: \$ 927

Via Online:

Jan. 26—Feb. 7, 2021: \$ 740

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