

SAINT JOAN of ARC NEWS

The members of St. Joan of Arc Parish are disciples of Jesus Christ, who recognize God's love for the world & are empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel to all people through joyful worship, life-long education, compassionate service, responsible stewardship, & active community living.

~ Mission Statement - Pentecost 1998 ~

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6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

"Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors,
Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all
that you vow." - Mt 5:33

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

CLPI

PARISH CENTER
22412 Overlake
Saint Clair Shores, MI 48080
Phone: 586-777-3670
Fax: 586-774-5528
Website: www.sjascs.org

SCHOOL
22415 Overlake
Saint Clair Shores, MI 48080
Phone: 586-775-8370
Fax: 586-447-3574
Website: www.stjoan.net

**FAITH AND FAMILY
FORMATION OFFICE**
22415 Overlake
Saint Clair Shores, MI 48080
Phone: 586-772-1282
Fax: 586-775-8374

Parish Directory / Liturgy Schedule

ST. JOAN OF ARC DIRECTORY

Parish Center

Phone: 586-777-3670
Fax: 586-774-5528

School

Phone: 586-775-8370
Fax: 586-447-3574

Faith Formation

Phone: 586-772-1282
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gmbugarin@sjascs.org
Lead for SJA

Fr. Andrew Dawson
adawson@sjascs.org

Fr. Jim Commyn (Moderator)
parish@stlucychurch.com

Fr. Eric Fedewa
frericstbasil@comcast.net

Fr. Stan Pachla
stveronicaeast@comcast.net

Msgr. Gary Smetanka
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**Non-Resident
Sacramental Minister**
Fr. Rich Bartoszek

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tstrasz@sjascs.org

Deacon Dom Pastore
dpastore@sjascs.org

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Principal

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Assistant Principal

Charles Kaiser
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Kristine Stewart Hass
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Exceptional Children

Michelle Russo

Youth Group

Linda Lietaert
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Athletic Director

Charles Kaiser
ckaiser@stjoan.net



LITURGY SCHEDULE

Weekdays

Monday thru Friday: 7:00 am

Weekends

Saturday: 4:00 pm & 6:00 pm

Sunday: 8:00 am, 10:00 am,
12:00 pm

Holy Day Masses

Vigil Mass: (evening prior) 7:00 pm
7:00 am, 12:00 pm, 7:00 pm

Reconciliation

Saturdays 11:00am-12:00pm
In the
Sister Carol Center

Holy Hour

Thursdays in Church at 7:00 pm

Rosary

Monday - Friday after the 7am mass

PARISH CENTER OFFICE HOURS

The Parish Center is open
Monday - Thursday from 8:30am-5pm
Friday from 8:30-4pm

Mass intentions and most services can be done in person or by calling us at 586-777-3670 during these hours.

Our after-hours emergency number: 586-777-1342.

Baptisms: Please go to our website (stjoan.church) and fill out the Baptism request form. You will be contacted to make further arrangements based on submission of that form.

Marriages: Arrangements should be made at the Parish Center at least six months prior to the desired date. Pre-marriage series required.

Registration: It is very important that every family and independent adult be registered in the Church in order to keep our records and mailings current. Please contact the Parish Office to register at your earliest opportunity: 586-777-3670.

RCIA: Please call the Parish Center: 586-777-3670

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A PARISHIONER?

If you would like to become a parishioner of St. Joan of Arc, please register at stjoan.church and we will contact you by phone. Or by calling us at 586-777-3670 during office hours.

Live Streamed Broadcasts at St. Joan of Arc

Live Stream Broadcasts have become a standard part of our celebrations at St Joan of Arc. This has increased our mass participation at daily and weekend masses. It has also allowed many of our parishioners to stay in touch with their faith community remotely.

Go to: livestream.stjoan.church to watch all live streaming and to view archived celebrations.

Weekday Masses

Monday thru Friday @ 7am

Weekend Masses

Saturdays @ 4pm & 6pm
Sundays @ 8am, 10am, 12pm

Holy Hour

Thursdays @ 7pm



Plumbing's NOT your thing ...Don't Do It!

As I have written here before, I have a list of projects and tasks that is pretty long. While I wish I had more

hours in the day to complete stuff on "THE LIST," as I age, I now wish I just had the ENERGY to complete things on THE LIST!

One reality about items on THE LIST is that family and staff pay attention to when items on THE LIST get completed. "How did you get that done ahead of my request," some will ask. But, like all things in life, it's about who you know. In this case, when Mom makes mention of something, her items get bumped up immediately.

Usually, with items on THE LIST, my own personal items sit around forever. I can put up with a broken this or that, thinking that one day I'll have time to work on things for me, but I usually allow my items to get pushed down THE LIST to work on something for someone else. I used to be able to work on my projects late into the night. Now I'm lucky if I haven't fallen asleep in my back room chair by 10 PM. That crazy chair seems to kidnap me every night. It never fails.

But one item on THE LIST needed to get bumped up to the top because Mom mentioned it. As you may know, my mom stays with me occasionally. It could be for a weekend or simply because she's not feeling well; it's much easier for us to watch over her at my house rather than at her condo when she's not feeling well.

My kitchen faucet needed to be replaced. It's been on THE LIST for a long time. Sure, I could have asked our maintenance team to deal with it, but I like doing things like this as a break from my daily stuff. The faucet was getting worse by the week. First, the water pressure was slowly dying, and then the hot water side stopped working altogether. The faucet was old and needed to be replaced. It was much more than changing the cartridge. But when my mom mentioned it not too long ago, I bumped it up on THE LIST. There's only one problem. While I dabble in many DIY projects, plumbing typically isn't my thing ... and I've had interesting outcomes to prove that point!

It was a Friday night. My mom

happened to be with me that weekend, and while she went off to watch a movie, I decided to tackle the faucet. As we parted ways, she said, "I'll see you in the morning. Knowing you, this won't be simple, and you'll be at it for several hours!" Yes, moms know all!

As I started the project, I could hear my guardian angel shouting, "DON'T DO THIS. Plumbing isn't your thing!" But I continued anyway. Getting the old faucet out was relatively simple. However, I did run into a few problems trying to get all the hoses through one of the steel washers so I could get the faucet out of the hole (although NOW, as I type this, I realize I could have just cut those hoses and it would have saved me about a half hour ... this is why I'm a novice). I also learned a trick from an article I read in my Family Handyman magazine: I should use a board or ironing board to lie on to save my back. In the past, I would lie in such a way that the cupboard framing would dig into my back. Now I know to use a board or an ironing board when I work on sink or faucet projects so I can lie there flat without hurting my back.

With the old faucet out, work on putting in the new faucet began. That went relatively smoothly, too, although I turned in such a way that I cracked in half the board I was using to lie on! Once I cleaned up that mess, I was able to get everything connected and in place. I felt pretty proud of myself that things were moving along so smoothly. Once all the hoses were connected, I double-checked that the connections were tight. I couldn't wait to turn on the shut-off valves and watch this faucet sing. First, I opened the hot water valve and then the cold water valve. All was quiet under the sink. I was hesitant to open the valves because I didn't trust that I did all of this correctly. Since all was quiet under the sink, I thought I was in the home stretch. I picked myself off the floor and turned on the faucet. I was confused. NOTHING was coming out of the faucet. NOTHING. I turned the handle a few different ways and got the same result ... NOTHING! My blood pressure started to boil. You have got to be kidding! How can there be nothing? I checked the shut-off valves, and they were open. "This could only happen to me," I thought to myself. I was thoroughly perplexed. Was it a broken faucet? That would just be my luck. Did I do something wrong? I could only roll my eyes.

So I went back underneath the sink to investigate matters. The hot and cold

water copper supply lines sit tall under my cabinet; they must be at least two feet tall. With my flashlight in hand, I saw that the supply hoses to BOTH the hot and cold water were completely kinked. They ended up this way primarily because of the height of the copper lines. It took me a while to rework how they were connected so they wouldn't kink. Once that was in place, I held my breath and turned on the faucet. I was ecstatic. It worked! Hurray! I prayed it would stay that way throughout the night so I didn't have a flood or mess to clean up when I got up the following day. When you're a Clark Griswold DIY novice, you never know how things will turn out! But this one win won't reverse the reality that plumbing isn't my thing. I have a long way to go! But, I'm making progress ... my kitchen is STILL waterfall free!

World Marriage Day: The Second Sunday in February is the annual celebration of World Marriage Day. World Marriage Day honors the lifelong commitment of husbands and wives and takes as its theme the commandment the Lord gave us to love one another. That commandment takes on a special prominence within a marriage relationship. Loving one another is a daily decision that couples must commit to every day of their life. It's a simple idea but often a challenging one. Loving one another requires neither gifts nor money. It becomes a way of life. The visible signs of living this command shouldn't be seen only on anniversaries, birthdays, Christmas, or Valentine's Day. Loving one another should be a daily reality!

One of the public service announcements for World Marriage Day had the following suggestions and thoughts: "1. Have you hugged your spouse today? 2. Call your spouse right now and say 'I Love You.' 3. Take out your wedding pictures tonight and share a memory with family and friends. 4. Show the family movies tonight to celebrate a marriage well done. 5. Bring a gift tonight to your spouse. 6. Fix his or her favorite meal tonight. 7. Share your love for each other with your children tonight. 8. Ask your spouse for a date tonight. 9. Tell each other how much your marriage means to you. 10. Share your love story with your children tonight."

Enjoy the week. Know of my prayers.

In Christ,

gmb
gmb@sjasc.org

Readings for the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time



SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – FEBRUARY 19 A

Reading One – Lv 19:1-2, 17-18

The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the whole Israelite community and tell them: Be holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am holy.

"You shall not bear hatred for your brother or sister in your heart. Though you may have to reprove your fellow citizen, do not incur sin because of him. Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against any of your people. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD."

Responsorial – Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13

R. The Lord is kind and merciful.

Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all my being, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

R. The Lord is kind and merciful.

He pardons all your iniquities, heals all your ills. He redeems your life from destruction, crowns you with kindness and compassion.

R. The Lord is kind and merciful.

Merciful and gracious is the LORD, slow to anger and abounding in kindness. Not according to our sins does he deal with us, nor does he requite us according to our crimes.

R. The Lord is kind and merciful.

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he put our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.

R. The Lord is kind and merciful.

Reading Two – 1 Cor 3:16-23

Brothers and sisters: Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God, which you are, is holy.

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you considers himself wise in this age, let him become a fool, so as to become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God, for it is written: *God catches the wise in their own ruses*, and again: *The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain*.

So let no one boast about human beings, for everything belongs to you, Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or the present or the future: all belong to you, and you to Christ, and Christ to God.

Alleluia – 1 Jn 2:5

Alleluia, alleluia.

Whoever keeps the word of Christ, the love of God is truly perfected in him.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel – Mt 5:38-48

Jesus said to his disciples: "You have heard that it was said, *An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth*. But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one as well. If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand over your cloak as well. Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go for two miles. Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow.

"You have heard that it was said, *You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy*. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same? So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect."

THIS WEEK ON **FORMED**

Week of February 12, 2023



Beloved - Session 1: Does Marriage Matter?

Happy Feast of St. Valentine! This Valentine's Day, remind yourself of the beauty of the Sacrament of Marriage with the Beloved series, presented by the Augustine Institute.



How to Study the Bible

Are you looking to take your spiritual life deeper this upcoming Lent? There's no better place to start than the Lord's Word. Join Dr. Gray and Dr. Giszczak as they explain how to study and devote yourself to Scripture!



What Do You Seek? The Search Episode 1

What is that deep longing in our hearts all about? We're all living for something, and we all strive for that something out there that is ultimately going to make us happy. But what is it? Watch Episode 1 of The Search to begin to answer this question.

Our parish has a FORMED subscription.
Visit signup.formed.org and select our parish name.

February 12, 2023

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sir 15:15-20 | 1 Cor 2:6-10 | Mt 5:17-37

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

*"Blessed are
they who
follow the law
of the Lord!"*

(Ps 119)

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Just the other day some of my friends agreed on a new way to approach the new year: Select one word, a kind of mantra for 2023. Ironically, even though I am indecisive to a fault, I had no trouble deciding on mine: "Choose." I often get stuck, whether it's deciding which online clothing purchases to return, what to order on the menu ... and don't get me started on major life decisions. Today's reading from Sirach reminds us of the choice that matters most: If we *choose* to keep the commandments, they will save us. "Before man are life and death, good and evil, whichever he chooses shall be given him." We are well into 2023, but it bears reminding that each day we have an opportunity to choose anew: To follow God's law, fulfilled in the words and example of Jesus. He will show us the way. "If you trust in God, you too shall live."

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

We've probably all heard the term "quiet quitting" by now. It's a workplace phenomenon where employees do the bare minimum rather than going above and beyond. I thought of that phrase when reading Matthew's Gospel today. How many of us Christians have "quietly quit," doing the minimum required - going to Mass on Sunday, being faithful to our spouse, not resorting to violence when we get angry with someone. Jesus challenges us to go above and beyond the Ten Commandments. You shall not kill, but you should not stay angry either. You shall not commit adultery, but you shall also love your spouse with your whole heart. Today's readings challenge us to rediscover God's law and challenge ourselves to go "above and beyond" in our daily lives.

PRAY Pray today's psalm (119): "Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!" How might you specifically follow the law of the Lord just a little bit better, or above and beyond, today? Each day?

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

the RESCUE project

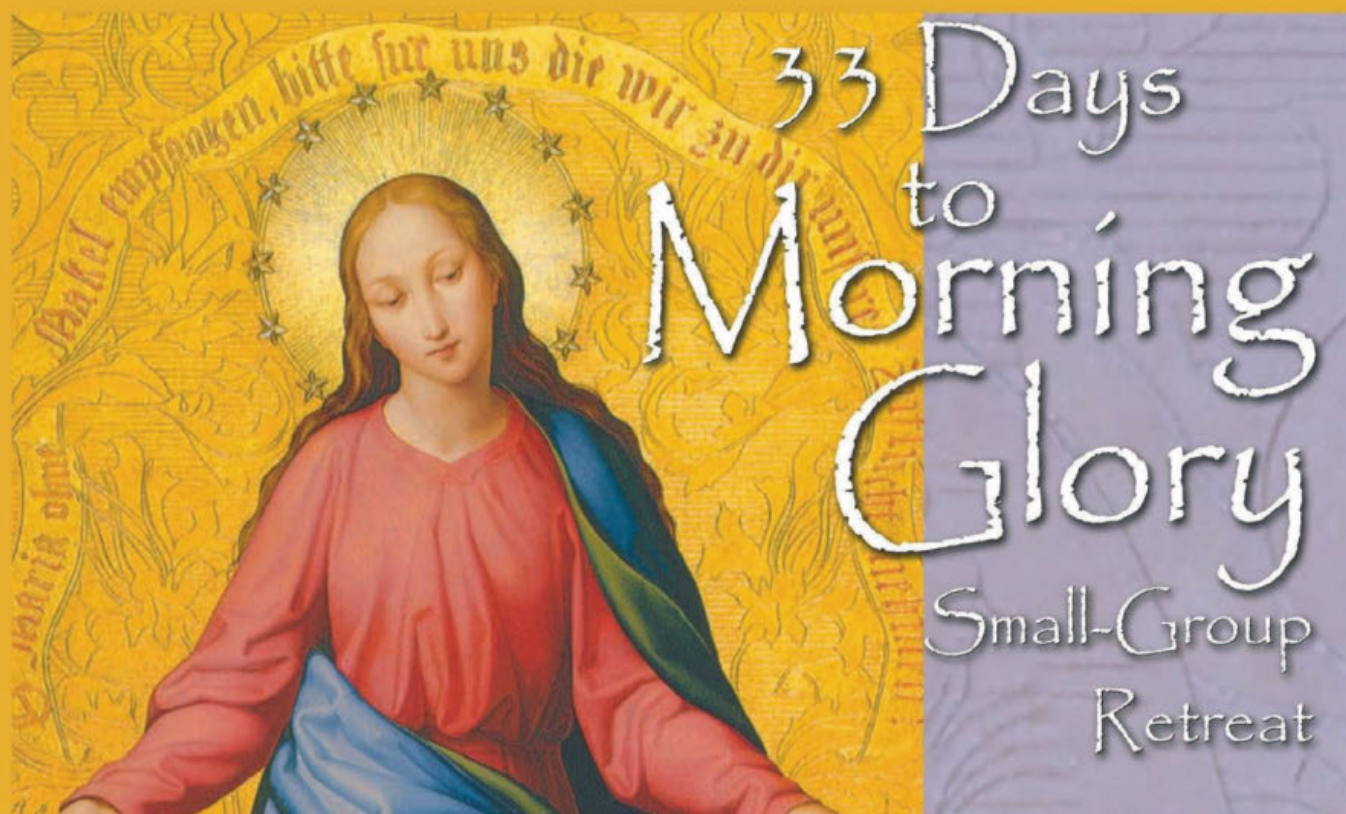


Coming to St. Joan of Arc
Beginning February 14
in-person or online

For trailer, information & to register online go to
sjascs.org/rescue

MEAL | EPISODE | DISCUSSION
All Adults and Teens are welcome!

The adventure you were born for beckons



There is still time to register and be part of this weekly retreat. Learn more at sjascs.org/morning-glory

CALLING ALL CHILDREN!

Come and join our new children's liturgical choir **Grace Notes** for students from our parish and school in grades 1-5

Weekly practices begin Wednesday, January 18, from 6:15-7 pm in the Church Music Room (off the parking lot between the church and school).

For details and to register go to sjascs.org/childrens-choir.

Contact Catherine Trudell with questions at cthomasesjascs.org or at the Parish Center at 586-777-3670

St. Joan of Arc

Join with parishioners and online friends as we work our way through the *Catechism in a Year* with Fr. Mike Schmitz and Ascension Press. New members welcome any time.

Find the link to the SJA SCS **Catechism in a Year Discussion Group** on the SJA Facebook page (search @sjascs) or see the homepage of the parish website.



Marriage Encounters



*In this sacrifice of the New and Eternal Covenant,
Christian spouses encounter the source from
which their own marriage covenant flows...*

Familiaris Consortio, 57

FOR YOUR
MARRIAGE

National Marriage Week
Every February 7-14
ForYourMarriage.org





World Marriage Day

A day when St. John Paul II gave his apostolic blessing.

Sunday, February 19, 2023

San Marino Club, 1685 East Big Beaver, Troy 48083

2:30-6:30 pm (doors open at 2:00 pm)

Dinner at 3:00 pm followed by Speakers & Dancing

Emcees: Deacon Dominick Pastore & Teresa Tomeo



Fr. Joseph Krupp: Words to Strengthen, Inspire and Guide Marriages



Fr. Joseph Krupp was born and raised in Montrose, Michigan, as the youngest of six children. Fr. Joe's mom and dad both say he "entered the world running." Fr. Joe was ordained to the priesthood 24 years ago and has served at multiple parishes as well as taught at Lansing Catholic High School, and Michigan State University. He has also served as Director of Campus Ministry at MSU and Chaplain for MSU football and the East Lansing Police Department. Fr. Joe is now the Pastor of Church of the Holy Family parish and school in Grand Blanc and St. Mark parish in Goodrich. His nationally syndicated monthly column for Faith Catholic and his weekly podcasts and live-streams allow him to teach and serve a virtual following that spans the globe. Fr Joe will speak on: Marriage & the Central

Mystery of Our Faith.

Follow Fr. Joe- Facebook: Fr. Joseph J Krupp | YouTube: Joe In Black Ministries | Instagram: @joeinblack88

Bill & Carol Brewis: Mercy, Joy and Healing in Marriage

Bill and Carol have been married 42 years and are blessed with 3 married children and 11 grandchildren. Carol earned an undergraduate degree in developmental Psychology and a Certificate in Spiritual Direction from Manresa and training from the JPII Healing Center. Bill has a degree in mathematics and worked in the computer and software industry. In 2005, they both left full time employment and set off on a spiritual journey to discern God's will for their lives. They are involved in prayer ministry, spiritual direction and minister spreading the mercy of God to aching mankind, especially in marriages & families.



Priests, as well as prayer ministers, will be available for blessing and prayers after the presentation.

Music by Rennie Kaufmann & his daughter Esther

Early Bird Special: Nov 25-Nov 28 - \$70/couple

By January 1 - \$75/couple; after January 1 - \$80/couple

Table Reservations \$350 (5 couples per table) by January 31

On-line registration & payment: WorldMarriageDay.org

For questions about table reservations: Email Dan/Debbie at worldmarriageday@yahoo.com

For general questions: Rich/Fran 586.979.0192 or waldenluv2@wowway.com

ADVANCED REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY FEB 12, 2023



Please print **both** names to complete form w/ payment payable to: World Marriage Day

Mail-in Registration

World Marriage Day

43814 Falcon Lane

Clinton Twp., MI 48038

Husband: _____ Wife: _____

First

Last

First

Last

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Amount: \$ _____ Tickets will NOT be sent to you, a nametag will be at the door

Special needs (dietary, accessibility, etc.): _____

Weekly Calendar of Events

Monday, February 13th

7:00 AM Morning Mass - Live Streamed

Tuesday, February 14th



7:00 AM Morning Mass Live Streamed

7:00 PM Rescue Project - EH/Livestreamed

Wednesday, February 15th

7:00 AM Morning Mass - Live Streamed

Thursday, February 16th

7:00 AM Mass - Live Streamed

7:00 PM Holy Hour

Friday, February 17th

7:00 AM Morning Mass - Live Streamed

Saturday, February 18th

9:00 AM Special Faith Formation

9:30 AM DCCR Meeting

11:00 AM Reconciliation

12:30 PM Baptism of Eleanora Rose Bono

1:30 PM Baptism of Jeffrey Daniel Reske

2:30 PM Baptism of Rosalie Elizabeth Turek

4:00 PM Vigil Mass - Live Streamed

6:00 PM Vigil Mass - Live Streamed

Sunday, February 19th

8:00 AM Sunday Mass - Live Streamed

10:00 AM OCIA - The Rite of Sending

10:00AM Sunday Mass- Live Streamed

12:00 PM Sunday Mass - Live Streamed

Words on the Word

Feb. 12, 2023 – Choices, Choices

All one need do is turn on the television news or open a newspaper or internet news site to see the bad news, most of it a result of poor choices someone has made.

A recent quick glance at the headlines, as an example, turned up numerous stories about assaults and gunshot victims, political hijinks, layoffs, contract disputes, court battles...

The list goes on.

By contrast, it takes a concerted effort to find reports on something that might qualify as good news, at least in the mainstream media.

One such recent example: an initiative at Wayne State University to expand a debt forgiveness program that excuses a certain level of unpaid bills for former students and encourages them to resume work on their degree.

The program, according to a report in *The Detroit News*, has attracted national attention and is serving as a model for some other schools, as well.

"It's an issue of justice," the school's president said in the report. "We bring these students in, they get into debt and they don't have a degree. It's unfair to them. We have to do everything we can to help them get a degree."

A cynic could argue, of course, that it's simply a marketing ploy, and point to others who did not get into debt, or got into debt but finished their degrees, but for now, that is beside the point.

It's good to see efforts to make a positive impact on the world. If it turns out to be a win-win scenario, all the better. That's a good choice.

"If you choose you can keep the commandments, they will save you," we hear in today's first reading from Sirach. "If you trust in God, you too shall live; he has set before you first and water to whichever you choose, stretch forth your hand. Before man are life and death, good and evil, whichever he chooses shall be given him."

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Mass Intentions / Weekly Readings

Mass Intentions

Monday February 13, 2023 Weekday (Green)

7:00 a.m. Mildred LeFevre

Tuesday February 14, 2023 Saint Cyril, Monk and Methodius Bishop (White)

7:00 a.m. Dennis Fleming

Wednesday February 15, 2023 Weekday (Green)

7:00 a.m. Domenica & Serafina DiBerardino

Thursday February 16, 2023 Weekday (Green)

7:00 a.m. Hugo Calisi

Friday February 17, 2023 Weekday, The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order (Green/White)

7:00 a.m. The deceased members of the Calisi Family who died in the month of February

Saturday, February 18, 2023 Weekday, BVM (Green/White)

4:00 p.m. Bonnie Batche, Donald Kowalewski, Marcella Cichoraki. Joan Weber, Dr. Lori Karol, Mark DeKoekkoek, Ella Pizzuti, Farida Manur, Christopher Weingartz and Special Intentions for teh J. Champine family and for the Thomas Family.

6:00 p.m. Leona Bell

Sunday February 19, 2023 Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (Green)

8:00 a.m. For the Intentions for St. Joan of Arc Parishioners

10:00 a.m. A Special Intention for Grayson Rupp

12:00 p.m. Rob Finn, Evan Battani, Robbie Battani

Daily Readings

Monday, February 13

Genesis 4:1-15, 25
Mark 8:11-13

Friday, February 17

Genesis 11:1-9
Mark 8:34-9:1

Tuesday, February 14

Genesis 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10
Mark 8:14-21

Saturday, February 18

Hebrews 11:1-7
Mark 9:2-13

Wednesday, February 15

Genesis 8:6-13, 20-22
Mark 8:27-33

Sunday, February 19

Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18
1 Corinthians 3:16-23
Matthew 5:38-48

Thursday, February 16

Genesis 9:1-13
Mark 8:27-33



I Am The Resurrection & The Life

“Heavenly Father, welcome home those who you have called from this world and grant peace and consolation to their families.”

**Mark Dunn
Mary Sesto
Patricia Clare**



“I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year: Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown. and he replied: Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light, and safer than a known way.”

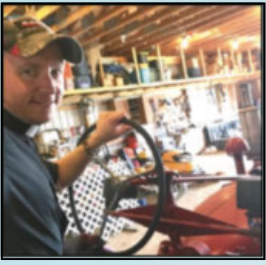
Minnie Louise Haskins



Reporting Sexual Abuse

Individuals with knowledge of sexual abuse by clergy or other Church representatives are urged to contact local law enforcement and/or the Michigan Attorney General's Office at 844-324-3374 or aginvestigations@michigan.gov.

Individuals also may contact the Archdiocese of Detroit by visiting protect.aod.org calling the toll-free, 24/7 victim assistance line at 866-343-8055 or by emailing vac@aod.org. There are no time limits or restrictions on individuals wishing to report abuse. Every complaint shared with the Archdiocese of Detroit, regardless of its source or the date of the alleged activity, is reported to civil authorities. No complaints are held back, pre-screened or disregarded.



In Light of Lent (Part I): Every New Year, it seems to me that we just get through the rush of our Christmas

celebrations and before we know it, it's Lent. And if Lent is a season of preparation, as was Advent, we should be putting some time into deciding how best to prepare. Every year, I find myself down to the 11th Hour— "it's Ash Wednesday this week and I still didn't decide what to give-up for Lent." Which leads me to this pre-emptive strike. Before Lent gets here, I wanted to talk about it. So this is the first of a two-part series, this Sunday and next, to help us think about our preparation for this season.

Each year, for Lent Catholics battle a test of will, giving-up something they love for 40 days, beginning on Ash Wednesday. It's a sacrifice, a challenge and just something we do as Catholics, but what if I told you that giving something-up might actually take your attention away from the true purpose of Lent and that you should probably do something else instead?

People usually give things up like chocolate, alcohol or social media. At their best, Lenten sacrifices can be a great devotion. By taking away something we love or seemingly depend on we're able to make a sacrifice like Jesus did when he gave-up his life on the cross. The struggle we feel helps us to realize how dependent we are on God and how trivial some of our creature comforts are.

But often, this is not the case. We spend all of our time thinking about how miserable we are that we don't have chocolate or alcohol or whatever, and make Easter all about the joy of getting it back. Easter comes and we eat an entire social media chocolate rum cake or something like that.

But even if we are able to stay focused on Christ and on the cross, a great devotion for sure, what we end-up doing is making the main focus of our attention Lent, the pain and sacrifice, rather than what it should be on. Lent is a time of preparation for Easter, and so it's the time in which we take an examination of our life and try to see how we can make our faith life a little bit better—what can we do to make our relationship with God and with others better in the way that we live our Christian life.

Lent is not an end in itself. It's not the focus of our lives as Christians. It is what is necessary for what is really important... Easter. In that case the more important question might be this: What is Easter? What exactly are we preparing for?

There are actually two things. The first is pretty obvious - Easter is a commemoration of Jesus's death and resurrection to new life - the Paschal mystery. Jesus died on the cross and rose again to new life. But the second part is a little less obvious. Easter is a celebration of our baptism. In Baptism, we participate in that Paschal mystery and so we enter the water to die to our old self, and we come out of the water a new person.

We come out of the water as a Christian and so the early church saw that intimate connection between the Paschal mystery and Easter and identified the Easter celebration as the time for doing baptisms. And if you think about it, it makes perfect sense on its own.

In Jesus, just as in the case of Lazarus rising from the dead, we celebrate God's power over death. But how do either these risings have anything to do with us?

This is where baptism comes in and why it's so important when we're baptized. We're not just commissioned to be like Jesus. We are initiated into the life of Jesus Himself, intimately tied to his death and so intimately tied to his

Resurrection. When we understand Easter in this way then our focus of Lent looks a lot different.

Lent has been, from ancient times, the period of time of preparation for baptism, and the faithful, and those preparing for baptism, engaged in it as a way to do penance, as a way to foster conversion of heart. They prepared for baptism and for the renewal of their baptismal promises. And for people preparing to enter the church, this season has a very clear meaning.

I recall going through this time of preparation myself. It was a time of preparation, but also of learning and of coming to know the Lord and His will—a peek behind the veil of the mysteries of the faith that I had felt called to investigate further. It was a time to wrestle with some of the teachings of the church and to try to understand them in light of gospels. It was a time to consider these teachings in the context of the life of Jesus and the personal call, which is ultimately what should draw each of us closer to Him as the years go by.

If Lent after Lent go by, and we are not changed as the years unfold, there is probably something missing from our Lenten practices.

But what about those of us who have already been baptized. Are we preparing to be baptized again? Of course not—we don't get baptized again, but we *do* renew our baptismal promises at Easter again, to identify the fact that through baptism we do participate in Christ's Paschal mystery. And we need to at least be reminded of it. We're called to remember this gift that we have received. And it's the baptismal promises I will address in part II, next week.

You are in my prayers this week.

Fr. Andrew adawson@sjascs.org

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The Class of 2023 is holding an ongoing can and bottle drive. This important fundraiser helps defray the cost of the class's graduation events.

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Joseph Whalen
Marilyn Wicker
Adrienne Weidenbach
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Bringing Home the Word

Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time (A)
February 12, 2023

Choose One

By Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

Law, wisdom, or virtue. Choose one. Today's first reading talks about wisdom. Throughout life, options are placed before us. Which should we pick? Life or death? Good or evil? How do we know which one to choose? Actually, we learn to choose through experience, either our own or the experience of those who have gone before us and left us their insights within our traditions—whether social, political, or religious. Some of these

traditions come to us as advice, others as law. One might say that law is really the expression or codification of social, political, or religious traditions. So, to follow the law is really to obey a certain kind of codified wisdom.

When St. Paul speaks about wisdom, he is referring to wisdom that comes from following the directives of God, not merely the insights gained through experience. He calls that a mature wisdom as opposed to the wisdom of this age. It is the kind of wisdom we find in Jesus, who lived his life for others, a kind of wisdom that some might consider foolish.

In the Gospel, Jesus insists that he is not abolishing law but fulfilling it. He urges us to go deeper into law and find wisdom, to go even deeper into human wisdom, and there to find virtue. Law deals with exteriors; virtue addresses the inner heart. Law forbids murder; virtue forbids hatred. Where do you live? In law? In wisdom? Or in virtue? Choose one. †



To follow the law is really to obey a certain kind of codified wisdom.

A Word from Pope Francis

By accepting the Law of God in our heart, one understands that, when one does not love one's neighbor, to some extent one kills oneself and others, because hatred, rivalry and division kill the fraternal charity that is the basis of interpersonal relationships. And this applies to what I have said about war and also about gossip, because words kill.

ANGELUS, ROME, FEBRUARY 16, 2020



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Am I too casual about rules and laws or too strict?
- What virtues shape my life?

Sunday Readings

Sirach 15:15–20

Before everyone are life and death, / whichever they choose will be given them.

1 Corinthians 2:6–10

"What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, / and what has not entered the human heart, / [is] what God has prepared for those who love him...."

Matthew 5:17–37 or 5:20–22a, 27–28, 33–34a, 37

I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.



(continued from last week)

Part III

The Gospels recount an incident where Jesus goes to the synagogue on a Sabbath, stands to read, and quotes a text from Isaiah—except he doesn't quote it fully. He omits a part that would have been known to his listeners. It describes Isaiah's vision of what will be the sign that God has finally broken into the world and irrevocably changed things.

For Isaiah, the sign that God is now ruling the earth will be good news for the poor, consolation for the brokenhearted, freedom for the enslaved, grace abundant for everyone, and vengeance on the wicked. Notice, though, when Jesus quotes this, he leaves out the part about vengeance and seeing the wicked punished.

Justice, Mercy, and the Nature of God

By Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

In heaven we will be given what we're owed and more (unmerited gifts, forgiveness we don't deserve, joy beyond imagining), but it seems we will not be given that catharsis we so much want here on earth: the "joy" of seeing the wicked punished.

We know we need God's mercy, but if grace is true for us, it has to be true for everyone. If forgiveness is given to us, it must be given to everybody. And if God does not avenge our misdeeds, God must not avenge the misdeeds of others, either. Such is the logic of grace and such is the love of God, to whom we must attune ourselves.

Part IV

Some day you will have to face your Maker! We've all heard that phrase. The hour will come when we will stand alone before God with no place to hide, no room to rationalize, and no excuses to offer for our weaknesses and sin. We will stand in a searing light, naked and exposed, and all we ever did, good and bad, will stand with us in that light. That prospect, however vaguely felt, makes for a dark corner in every person's mind.

But searing judgment of our souls is meant to be a daily occurrence, not a single traumatic moment at the end of our lives. We are meant to bring ourselves, with all our complexities and weaknesses, into God's full light every day. Genuine prayer brings us into that searing light.

We are meant to face God like this every day, not just at the moment of our death. So we should set aside time each day to put ourselves into God's presence without words and without images, where—naked, stripped of everything, silent, exposed, hiding nothing, completely vulnerable—we simply sit, full face, before God's judgment and mercy.

By doing this, we will preempt any traumatic encounter at the time of our death and we will begin, here and now, to enjoy more fully God's empathic embrace. †

(continued next week)



Abiding God, may we be faithful to the law of love your son revealed to the world. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

This reflection is an excerpt from *Daybreaks: Daily Reflections for Lent and Easter* by Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI, available now from Liguori Publications. Visit Liguori.org to learn more and review our complete list of *Daybreaks* authors, including Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR; Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA; Fr. Daniel Horan, OFM, and others.

WEEKDAY READINGS

February 13–18

Monday, Weekday:

Gn 4:1–15, 25 / Mk 8:11–13

Tuesday, Sts. Cyril and Methodius:

Gn 6:5–8; 7:1–5, 10 / Mk 8:14–21

Wednesday, Weekday:

Gn 8:6–13, 20–22 / Mk 8:22–26

Thursday, Weekday:


Gn 9:1–13 / Mk 8:27–33

Friday, Weekday:

Gn 11:1–9 / Mk 8:34–9:1

Saturday, Weekday:

Heb 11:1–7 / Mk 9:2–13

Bringing Home
the Word 
February 12, 2023

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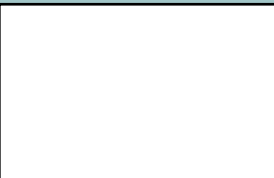
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