

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF SAINT BRENDAN



5th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come." - Mk 1:38

MASS:

Sunday 10:00 am

Walk Away From A Treasure?

It's always good to receive Christmas cards from old friends, even if the cards do arrive in late January because of delays in the postal system nationwide. It's all caused by unprecedented package and mail volume for the holidays and absenteeism at an all-time high due to the pandemic. Even our bills arrive weeks late!

This year, among the assortment of missives from folks around the country I met in several journalism jobs across the decades, I received an e-mailed Christmas newsletter detailing events in one family I have known since the 1970s. All the cards were welcome, but this electronic response stood out in my mind because it contained a twist I would never have expected during the Christmas season.

After the usual light-hearted updates on their grown children and grandkids, plus a lament any one of us could have written about forced isolation during a pandemic year, this letter veered into territory that made my head spin. It read: "We had been missing Mass here because of the virus, but when we did go back, my husband decided he will never return again because of a negative comment about Muslims that the priest made during his homily."

Now that is unusual. Unusual because of the topic in a Christmas newsletter, and unusual because of the vehemence and finality of the man's decision. One sermon and he's gone?

The more I thought about this, the more it bothered me. I have been going to Mass most weeks since I was a child, not to mention daily Mass now and then, and I can safely say that I never once heard any disparaging remarks about Muslims from the pulpit. It might have happened, but I suspect that what my friend actually heard was not negative remarks about Muslims in general, but facts about the widespread wanton destruction of Christian churches and persecution of believers in the MidEast by members of extremist Muslim sects. Mainstream Muslims would not condone such actions.

I did send a short e-mail back, saying that disparaging remarks about any religious group from the pulpit is never acceptable. But if such remarks were made, I added, they would never make me abandon the Mass and the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

Walk away from that treasure? How sad. How self-defeating. I pray that my friend will rethink that hasty decision while there is still time to be reconciled with the God who came to Earth and gave everything, including His very life, for us.

— Lou Jacquet



Lenten Practices Scheduled

St. Brendan's will be distributing blessed ashes at two Masses on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17. The Masses will be celebrated at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Stations of the Cross will be celebrated on all Fridays during Lent at 3 p.m. in the church, except at noon on Good Friday. Please consider joining us for this beautiful ritual.

Parish Council Meeting

Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday, February 8th at 6:00 p.m. in Room 102.

Lenten plans will be finalized, so please make every effort to attend. Agenda items can be e-mailed or called to Rosie Marich: 330-792-5694.

Lenten Fish Dinner Take Out

Our Lenten Fish Fry will begin on Friday, February 19 as Take Out Only, Pre-order or Drive up. Lunch will be served 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Order a sandwich and choice of side for \$7 or a Dinner \$11.

Dinner service will begin at 4 p.m. Menu includes: Baked, Fried, Beer Battered fish with option of Cajun seasoning; with coleslaw or applesauce, and a choice of 2 sides: haluski, mac and cheese, parsley potatoes or seasoned fries, and cake. Call 330-799-3683 to order.

Sunday, February 7

10:00 a.m. Irene Toth

By Family

Wednesday, February 10

9:00 a.m. Arline Cannata

By Helen Beshara

Sunday, February 14

10:00 a.m. Mike Infante

By Patty Infante

Please Pray For Our Sick

Ralph Ruggiero, Randy Bennett, Joe Gorman, Teri Laret, Dorothy LoSasso, Kathleen Baytos

Pray for the Faithful Departed, May They Rest from Their Labors

Madeline Miller

Fifth Sunday In Ordinary Time

Saint Scholastica: Life As The Lesser-Known Sibling

Everyone knows there is a natural rivalry between brothers and sisters, especially when they are growing up together, to be the best at something or at least to outdo the other in renown.

But how would you like to have been the sister of an Italian nobleman who became much more celebrated than you, despite your own lifetime of holiness, your founding of a woman's religious community that still thrives, and your untold good deeds that have gone almost completely unrecorded? In short, how would you like to be mostly known for being the sister of a revered and much better known brother?



That's the true but unfair story of St. Scholastica (480-543 A.D.), the sister of St. Benedict of Nursia, the latter famously celebrated as the founder of western monasticism. The Church remembers Scholastica's sainthood on February 10, but has never paid her nearly the attention heaped upon her more well-known sibling.

It is true that Benedict was quite worthy of all

that attention himself, having been a hermit; then an abbot so strict that it is said his first followers tried to poison him; a founder of several small monasteries; and eventually the founder of perhaps the world's best-known monastery at Monte Cassino, Italy.

But still...his sister deserves better. We know so few documented biographical details about the life of Scholastica, who may have been Benedict's twin. What we do know of her life can be found in a few sentences in Pope St. Gregory the Great's "Dialogues."

Gregory tells us that as a young woman Scholastica was attracted to the spiritual life and founded a company of virgins which eventually moved to a convent near Monte Cassino. She met with her brother Benedict outside the monastery walls once a year "to discuss with him matters of great spiritual import to each." She is reported to have died three days after their last visit. We can only imagine how emotional, how special those annual visits were to siblings so dedicated to God, to the spiritual life, and to each other.

Catholicism considers Scholastica the first Benedictine nun. When Benedict died four years after his sister, his remains were buried in her grave as per his wishes. They are together for eternity as they had been in this life.

St. Scholastica, role model for all who labor in obscurity for the Kingdom in the shadow of someone more celebrated, pray for us.

— Lou Jacquet

Sunday's Scriptures: Job, A Study In Suffering

Our Scripture today comes from the Book of Job and describes Job's vision of life on earth in the midst of suffering. Job is experiencing profound suffering every day. He sees stretched out before him days and years of labor followed by restless nights. At this point he feels his days are useless and longs for God to take him.

Before we find ourselves judging Job harshly for his negative attitude, let us go back in the story and discover what has happened to him. The story begins, "in the land of Uz, there was a man named Job, who was blameless and upright, who feared God and turned away from evil." He was prosperous; he had seven sons and three daughters. He had thousands of sheep, camels and cattle and very many servants. He was a content man.

Satan suggests that God put Job to a test to

see if Job will respect and praise God in adversity. In one disastrous day, Job loses all his cattle, possessions, and his 10 children. The Scriptures tell us that he responds by tearing his robe, shaving his head and worshipping God from a prostrate position on the ground. Job responds with these words: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

One more suffering is added to Job's loss. He is struck with skin sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. With all of this unbearable suffering, and questions he endures from his friends, is it hard to understand why Job would find his days and nights a burden?

But even with depressed thoughts, Job ac-

Journey, Our Youth Group

St. Brendan Youth Ministry meets each Sunday from 6-8 p.m. with St. Charles Youth Ministry. Next Sunday, February 14th will be our third Agape Latte session, with music, a guest speaker, and coffee, hot chocolate, juice and pastries.

Then, Sunday, February 21st we meet at St. Charles for live praise and worship music coupled with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and prayer teams. This should be a powerful way to begin our Lenten journeys by spending some one-on-one time with Jesus, our Lord, in Adoration. If you are interested in either of these events for your teen, please contact Natalie:

nwardle@youngstowndiocese.org Check next week's bulletin for more information.

Job, A Study In Suffering

Continued from Page 3

accepts his suffering and continues his praise of God. He later shares a beautiful line of faith. "I know that my Vindicator lives." He continues to trust the God who made him. He passes the test initiated by Satan. God restores everything back to Job.

Job is a difficult book of the Bible because suffering is difficult. It always tests us to abandon our faith and trust in God. Perhaps we can learn from the behavior and faith of Job and the words and actions of the late Cardinal John O'Connor of New York: "The only thing more tragic than suffering is wasted suffering."

Cardinal O'Connor urged others to unite their suffering to Christ's suffering on the cross and participate in Christ's redemptive work. The cardinal offered up all the suffering he endured from brain cancer with Jesus' sufferings on the cross, for the sufferings of the world. His pain was still pain, but his pain was not worthless. It had great value. So can ours.

— Geri Jacquet

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Administrator

Father Leo Wehrlin Ext. 11

Email: lwehrlin@youngstowndiocese.org

Parochial Vicar

Father Simon Mino Ext. 11

Parish Secretary

Lynn Anderson Ext.10

Email: office@stbrendanyo.org

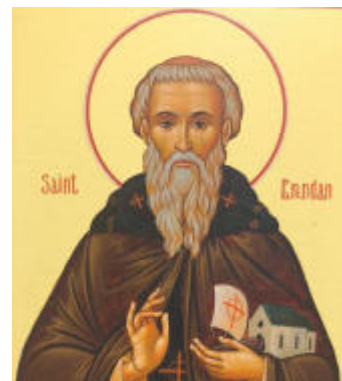
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