



Pope Francis has always stressed the value of American unity inscribed on the nation's coat of arms: *E Pluribus Unum*. On his Apostolic Journey to the US in 2015, he was the first Pope to address a joint session of Congress. On that occasion, he delivered a speech which - through figures such as Abraham Lincoln, Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton and Martin Luther King Jr - underscored what makes American democracy unique. From that speech five years ago to his words at the Angelus on 10 January about what happened on Capitol Hill four days earlier, Pope Francis has always encouraged people to reject disruptive tendencies, and to work with patience and courage for reconciliation and unity.

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**Modern Martyr**

Nigeria's Fr. John Gbakaan, parish priest of the Saint Anthony Church in Gulu, in the Diocese of Minna, was kidnapped on 15 January along the Lambata road to Lapai in the state of Niger, reports the Catholic wire service, *Agenzia Fides*.  
 (continued on page 6)



*Respect Life Prayer Service* **TODAY, SUNDAY NOON**

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**Please see Priest BEFORE Mass.**

“Walk with each other. Do not be afraid to embrace God’s gift of life. Whatever storms or trials we face, we are not alone. He is with us. ‘Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age’ (Matthew 28:20).”

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 USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities Respect  
 Life Reflection: Be Not Afraid

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 Sunday, January 17, 2021:  
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- 3) Open your smartphone camera and hold it over the QR code and follow the prompts and it will take you to our channel!



President Trump has left office and, in one of the greatest qualities of our republic, a peaceful transfer of power took place on January 20. Despite the terror of the attack on the Capitol on January 6, our nation survives.

President Biden began Inauguration Day as he begins many days, by attending Mass. Although the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is most recognized by American Catholics as “the” Catholic Church in Washington, the Cathedral Church of DC is Saint Matthew’s. It was in this historic old Church that many significant events have taken place including the Requiem Mass for the late President John F. Kennedy in November, 1963.

Pres. Biden is the second Roman Catholic president. Kennedy the first.

When Kennedy was running for president, religion was a major issue. President Kennedy, as a Catholic, worried some voters that he would have allegiance to the Pope and the teachings of the Catholic Church more than to the Constitution. To allay fears, Kennedy said the following at a prayer breakfast:

**“I am not the Catholic candidate for president. I am the Democratic Party candidate for president, who also happens to be a Catholic. I do not speak for my Church on public matters, and the Church does not speak for me.**

**Whatever issue may come before me as President, if I should be elected, on birth control, divorce, censorship, gambling or any other subject, I will make my decision in accordance with these views, in accordance with what my conscience tells me to be in the national interest, and without regard to outside religious pressure or dictates. And no power or threat of punishment could cause me to decide otherwise.”**

Kennedy mentions “Birth control” and “Divorce” as particular issues. Abortion, Physician Assisted Suicide and the Death Penalty were not even on the radar in 1960.

The issues regarding Respect for Life are intrinsically tied to being a Catholic. Abortion is the taking of innocent human life. As Catholics we are all bound by this teaching. However, at the very least, we should make ourselves aware of these teachings to have “an informed conscience” rather than simply going along with bumper-sticker mentality.

When I have challenged politicians on their stands on issues of life, they say they “have to listen to all people” or “represent all people.” That is not possible. One cannot represent “everyone”.

Each year, when we put a display on the lawn as a reminder about the value of Life, I get an anonymous letter from a person accusing us of many things including condemning those who have had or participated or persuaded others to have an abortion. Not true. The emphasis is on conversion and forgiveness.

Nobody is the “perfect” follower of Christ. (Except the Blessed Mother). But we all have a responsibility to respect the gift of life in all its forms.

Terence Cardinal Cooke, archbishop of New York, suffered silently from leukemia for a number of years. Several days before his death, he wrote an open letter to the People of New York including these words: *“The gift of life, God's special gift, is no less beautiful when it is accompanied by illness or weakness, hunger or poverty, mental or physical handicaps, loneliness or old age.”*

*fr. James*

**“Many people know someone personally who is suffering because of an abortion. If a friend confided in you tomorrow that she had an abortion, would you be able to respond in a way that brings her closer to healing? ... Even a woman who doesn’t go to church or think of herself as religious can be afraid that God will never forgive her for having an abortion. She should know that God loves and forgives those who are sorrowful. He wants to comfort them and give them his peace. USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities “How to Talk to a Friend Who’s Had an Abortion” January 31st “Walk with each other. Do not be afraid to embrace God’s gift of life. Whatever storms or trials we face, we are not alone. He is with us. ‘Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age’ (Matthew 28:20).”**

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*Thank you to my parish family here at Saint Bernadette for all the thoughts, prayers and actions of love I have received since my husband Jim transitioned to his Heavenly home. You provided me strength to overcome my tears and to return to my ministry. Your love embraces me daily as I travel this new journey of life.  
Forever grateful, Sharon Urbaniak*

January is Respect Life Month  
Did you know the federal death penalty was reinstated last year? 13 people have been executed in the last 7 months. Please pray for an end to the death penalty.



God’s Family is a ministry to all age people with disabilities and their families. We will gather monthly by Zoom to grow as a loving community where all are welcome. We sing, pray, learn about the Catholic faith and strive to evangelize. This year we will learn a variety of ways to pray using words, actions and expressive movement. Each family will receive a kit with items for your prayer space, music and crafts. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Sharon at 648-1720 ext.3 or [sharonu@saintbopny.org](mailto:sharonu@saintbopny.org) Our next session will be held on January 30<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. Our theme will be expression of prayer through music and movement.



*In Charity,  
Please pray for the sick...*

Linda Schooley, Chad Tanyi, Ruth Kohl, Judy Kohl, Julie Caughel, Grace Lesinski, Cindy Podkulski, Dan Ralyea, Willena & Paul Milley, Austin & Joseph Dunsmore, Jennifer Schunk, Theresa & Baby Ben Fisher, Karen Gollwitzer, Jane Johnson, Stanley Rosiek, John Aldrich, Beth Bestpitch, Julie Gibson Brown, Kim Chamberlin, Karen Chwojdak, Angela Colosi, Peter DiGiulio, Shellie Ellis, Edith Flynn, George Gallagher, Julie Gibson-Brown, Theresa Gemza, Mary Gould, Tim Hines, Cole Huson, Tom Johnson, Rosemary Kersten, John Kordrupel Sr., Patty Latimore, Theresa McDonnell, Patricia Paradowski, Isabella Phelan, Lori Pohrte, Pat Rosenhahn, Christine Sherman, Michael Schlehr, Sylvester Stang, Jessica Steffan, Joan Suida, Matthew Tremblay, Renee Troyan, Kathleen Turner, Lynn VanOver, Natale Zwolinski.

**Please pray for all the recently deceased, especially the woman and two children who perished in the fire on Newton Road this past week, Sr. Elaine Franz, RSM & Rev. L. Antonio Rodriguez.**

**Please pray for our military men & women and their families. And all first responders.**



The Catholic Relief Services Collection is an opportunity for you to help improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable people around the world and here in the United States. Funds from the collection support Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and other organizations that aid victims of natural disasters, immigrants in need of legal assistance and resources to help them adapt to life in their new home, and refugee children with special educational needs. Thanks for your generosity.



**Readings for the week of January 24, 2021**

- Sunday: Jon 3:1-5, 10/Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9 [4a]/1 Cor 7:29-31/Mk 1:14-20
- Monday: Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22/Ps 117:1bc, 2 [Mk 16:15]/Mk 16:15-18
- Tuesday: 2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 7-8a, 10 [3]/Mk 3:31-35
- Wednesday: Heb 10:11-18/Ps 110:1, 2, 3, 4 [4b]/Mk 4:1-20
- Thursday: Heb 10:19-25/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 [cf. 6]/Mk 4:21-25
- Friday: Heb 10:32-39/Ps 37:3-4, 5-6, 23-24, 39-40 [39a]/Mk 4:26-34
- Saturday: Heb 11:1-2, 8-19/Lk 1:69-70, 71-72, 73-75 [cf. 68]/Mk 4:35-41
- Next Sunday: Dt 18:15-20/Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 7-9 [8]/1 Cor 7:32-35/Mk 1:21-28

**MASSES etc.**

**WE WILL CONTINUE TO LIVE-STREAM MASSES ON THE SAINT BERNADETTE FACEBOOK PAGE & YOUTUBE**

**Social Distancing & disinfecting in effect.**

**MASSES SUNDAY AM IN GYM (G) AND CHURCH (C)**

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 23**

5:00C Dec. Mbrs. of Bermingham & Sweeney Families by Jim & Noreen Bermingham

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 24 - 3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

8:30G Mass for the People of God by Fr. Paul  
 8:30C Richard M. McCarthy by Nancy & Family  
 11:00G Paul O'Brien by Chester & Pat Rosinski  
 11:00C Robert Rosenhahn by Patti & Karl Rosenhahn  
 8:05C Martin Lee by the Mullins Family

**MONDAY, JANUARY 25 - THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL, APOSTLE**

7:00 Al Rettig by Wife  
 11:30 Jack Redmond by Daughter, Dawn

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 26 - STS. TIMOTHY AND TITUS**

7:00 Andrysiak, Cyman & Niezgodza Families by Family  
 11:30 Dec. Mbrs. of the Orrange Family by Pat & Martha Nealon

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27 - ST. ANGELA MERICI**

7:00 Constance Janak by Noel & Cheryl Galluch  
 11:30 Bernard Gemza by Theresa Gemza  
 6:00 Penance

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 28 - ST. THOMAS AQUINAS**

7:00 Kevin Sullivan by St. Bernadette Holy Name Society  
 11:30 Dec. Mbrs. of the LoVullo, Regan & Benz Families by Family

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 29**

7:00 Mary Anne Roll by Jack & Mary Hertenstein  
 11:30 Donald Therolf by Barb Dumain

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 30**

9:00 Eileen Courtade by Patty & Dominic Telesco  
 5:00C MASS for the People of God by Fr. Paul

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 31 - 4TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

8:30G Frances Urbanczyk by Tom Sciolino  
 8:30C Margaret Seil by Family  
 11:00G John Starnes by God's Family  
 11:00C Janine Meyer by the Knapp Family  
 8:05C Jim Zern by Jim & Pat Connolly



### Faith Formation

In this week's Gospel, Jesus calls his first disciples. These men drop everything to

follow him. Imagine what Jesus' presence was like to have this response. Many of us would find such a sudden change in ourselves or in another person difficult to understand. What or who would you give everything up for? These first disciples were willing to drop everything to make Jesus and the Kingdom of God the most important things in their lives. As a family, gather and talk about situations in which you have had to "drop everything." Like a call to pick up a sick child from school, a parent asking for your help now, etc. How did you feel about having to change your plans in these situations? How do we feel when someone asks you to drop everything to help them? For us, it is not easy to drop everything to respond to another's needs. Read today's Gospel, Mark 1:14-20. Invite your family to imagine what Jesus' presence and invitation to these first followers must have been like that they responded by leaving their livelihood to become his disciples. How might our life change if we understood the Kingdom of God to be as important and immediate in our lives? Ask God to help you experience the Kingdom of God with a deeper commitment. Have each family member name one action they will do to put Jesus first in their life this week. Together, pray the Lord's Prayer.

This scripture, always brings to mind my husband. Being inspired by John F. Kennedy's comment, "Do not ask what can your country do for you, but what can you do for your country", Jim asked God what he could do for him. In response, he felt called to travel throughout the United States and Europe with only his guitar, a change of clothes and a few dollars to live among God's people. He offered kindness and kindness was returned. He offered to clear table and do dishes for a meal. He slept under bridges, in fields and ditches trusting God would watch over him. He shared his musical talents and faith stories leading others to a relationship with Jesus. Now as he is in Heaven, may the faith and love he shared with me for twenty-one years, lead me to new ways to share our faith with you and those without faith.

Your sister in Christ,  
Sharon Urbaniak, Faith Formation Director  
[sharonu@saintbopny.org](mailto:sharonu@saintbopny.org)  
Office 648-1720 ext. 3 Cell 200-6923



Teens and Families! Since we will not be going to Washington D.C. this year for the March for Life, some faith leaders from around the diocese come together to bring you a virtual retreat! A group of teens from the diocese joined us virtually this weekend to walk through the retreat video, but if you missed it and would like to watch with friends or family, you can find the YouTube video on our website. It is about an hour and a half long. Thanks!

### Youth Ministry Reflection: Bible in a Year

Are you like me and still looking for a good New Years Resolution? I was introduced to this a little late, but I wanted to share with you as well! Ascension Press released the "Bible in a Year" podcast on January 1st of this year. Each day, you can listen to a little bit of scripture and hear it explained from the historical context as well as a spiritual meaning for each of us today. You can find it wherever you can listen to podcasts. It has really been a blessing for me when I take the 20 minutes or so out of my day to listen to the story of scripture. That is all I have for this week, but I hope you will go out and start listening from Day 1 - Genesis 1 and share it with your friends.

Let us become a people more familiar with scripture so that we can share the Word of God with all we meet!

God Bless you and I look forward to seeing you around the parish,

Jesse Saltarelli, Youth Minister  
716-909-0208 / [jesses@saintbopny.org](mailto:jesses@saintbopny.org)



Come join **THE MESSAGE** on **Thursday each week at 10:30am**. We simply read next Sunday's Gospel and reflect on questions to help us live out the Gospel message. You can gather from wherever you are using a computer or a phone. You will receive an email invitation offering information to connect to the Zoom meeting. Either you will dial a number to just be heard via telephone or click a link to join the meeting. If you have a camera on your computer, you can join us with a live picture. For an invitation, contact Sharon at 648-1720 ext. 3 or [sharonu@saintbopny.org](mailto:sharonu@saintbopny.org) We invite you to join us. We will forward you The Message sheet before we gather virtually.



## BISON Children's Scholarship Fund

We are a tuition assistance program helping economically eligible children attend private grammar schools of their choice regardless of income or zip code. The scholarship amounts vary depending on the family's income, household size and the school's tuition cost. The highest scholarship amount for 2021-22 school year is **\$2,500** per child. Families will be expected to contribute partial tuition towards their child's education. The application process is now open for new families. Please visit [www.bisonfund.com](http://www.bisonfund.com) to complete a scholarship pre-application for the 2021-22 school year. **The deadline to apply is February 28, 2021.** All pre-applications will be entered into a lottery drawing on March 1, 2021. For more information, please call 716-854-0869.

## THIS WEEK AT OUR PARISH

### MONDAY, JANUARY 25

No Activities Scheduled  
Due to COVID ORANGE ZONE

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 26

No Activities Scheduled

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27

Penance, 6 p.m.  
Rosary for Peace, 7 p.m., Chapel

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 28

Faith Formation done VIRTUALLY, due to COVID ORANGE ZONE  
Purpose, 6:45 p.m.  
Y-Disciple, 6:45 p.m.

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 29

No Activities Scheduled

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 30

Youth Ministry Volunteer Formation. VIRTUAL  
Vigil Mass: 5 p.m. (Church)

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 31 - 3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Masses: **8:30 a.m.** (Church & Gym), **11 a.m.** (Church & Gym), **Life Teen Mass 8:05 p.m.** (Church)



### Word of Life

...from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

“Many people know someone personally who is suffering because of an abortion. If a friend confided in you tomorrow that she had an abortion, would you be able to respond in a way that brings her closer to healing? ...Even a woman who doesn't go to church or think of herself as religious can be afraid that God will never forgive her for having an abortion. She should know that God loves and forgives those who are sorrowful. He want to comfort them and give them his peace.”

## Eucharistic Adoration

**There is a need for several hours to be covered. If you would like more information about adoration or to find out how to sign up for a holy hour, please call or text Gidget at (716) 481-2720.**



### MINISTRY

Pastor: Fr. Paul D. Seil: [frpaul@saintbopny.org](mailto:frpaul@saintbopny.org)  
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Deacon: Ed Howard  
Pastoral Minister: Sr. Colleen O'Toole, RSM  
[srcolleen@saintbopny.org](mailto:srcolleen@saintbopny.org)  
Youth Ministers: Jesse & Sarah Saltarelli:  
[Jesses@SaintBOPNY.org](mailto:Jesses@SaintBOPNY.org)  
Director of Faith Formation:  
Sharon Urbaniak: [sharonu@saintbopny.org](mailto:sharonu@saintbopny.org)  
Faith Formation Office: Linda Jeswald: [lindaj@saintbopny.org](mailto:lindaj@saintbopny.org)  
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Office Fax: (716) 649-0211

Prayer Chain Requests: Kathy McNall (716) 662-7712 or  
Pat Rosenhahn (716) 675-6598  
Advocate for People w/Special needs: Heidi Mack

## Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire You in my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

As though You were already there, I embrace You and unite myself to You; permit not that I should ever be separated from You.

**Won't you consider volunteering to help us with the disinfection process?** It's very simple and involves running the UVC lights to disinfect the Church, as well as wiping down a few surfaces. If we get enough volunteers, this would only involve your participation once every 4 weeks. For more information, please contact Gidget Podkulski at (716)649-3090 ext. 118 or at [gidgetp@saintbopny.org](mailto:gidgetp@saintbopny.org), providing both your email address and phone number.



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**Modern Martyr** continued from Page 1

### Demand for ransom

On 15 January, the priest and his brother were ambushed by gunmen. The attack took place around 9 p.m. near the village of Tufa. The two brothers were abducted by armed men who then sought ransom from the Diocese of Minna. Initially, the kidnappers demanded a sum of thirty million naira, which they later reduced to five million naira.

The priest's body was found near the site of the kidnapping. Father Gbakaan was executed with a machete in such a brutal and horrific manner that identification was hardly possible. The vehicle that the priest was travelling in was found in a nearby bush. There is still no news of the priest's brother, who is said to be still in the hands of the kidnappers.

### Shocking and painful

The Christian Association of Nigeria, (CAN), has asked the Federal Government to end the abductions and killing of religious persons by bandits in the country. CAN's Vice Chairman (Northern region), Rev. John Hayab, made the call when he spoke to the Lagos-based daily, *Vanguard*. Rev. Hayab described the Catholic priest's killing as "shocking and painful," stating that insecurity in the North of Nigeria had assumed a much more alarming dimension.

### Pleading with the Federal Government

"Today in Northern Nigeria, many people live in fear, and many young people are afraid to become pastors because pastors' lives are in great danger," said Rev. Hayab. He continued, "When Bandits or Kidnappers realise that their victim is a priest or pastor it seems a violent spirit takes over their hearts to demand more ransom and, in some cases, go to the extent of killing the victim. We are simply pleading with the Federal Government and all security agencies to do whatever it will take to bring this evil to a stop," the CAN representative said.

—Vatican News Service

**FORMED** offers many multimedia Catholic resources. Invite a family or friends over to watch one of the movies. Listen to the audio programs while traveling in the car. Invite friends to participate in a series which usually comes with a leader guide and participant programs that can be downloaded. Visit our website, [www.saintbopny.org](http://www.saintbopny.org), select the tab Formation and then FORMED.org to set up an account. This program is paid for by the generosity of parishioners. We encourage you to check the site out. **This Week's offerings on FORMED are:**  
**John Paul II: I Kept Looking for You** This film is a great tribute to the man who inspired millions to deeper faith in Jesus Christ. **Misery Meets Mercy** is a discussion on the Divine Mercy. **7 Secrets of Confession** Catholic Speaker Vinny Flynn explores the incredible gift of mercy we encounter in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. **The Augustine Institute Story** with Dr. Tim Gray is a live talk weekly on Thursdays at 7pm that brings the truth and beauty of the Gospel to Catholics.

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