

### SANCTUARY CANDLES

The Sanctuary Candles in both Newton and Plaistow may be offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00. Please call the Parish Office at 382-8324.

### VIGIL LIGHT

The Vigil Light in front of the Blessed Mother Icon in Newton may be offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00.

### WINTER WEATHER CLOSINGS

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Office, Holy Angels Cemetery Office, Saint Luke Food Pantry and the Parish Liturgical schedule complies with the longstanding inclement weather policy of Saint Luke Religious Education Program and Holy Angels Pre-School-Kindergarten: **If the Timberlane and/or Sanborn regional school districts close because of inclement weather, ALL Parish Offices and Parish programs will be closed or suspended. All activities by any Parish or non-Parish groups will be cancelled for that day/evening on both campuses.** In the event of a weather related closing, the scheduled weekday Liturgy will not be held and the intention (if any) will be moved to a conveniently available date. **Sunday (or Saturday evening) liturgies can never be cancelled, but all are advised to use prudence when deciding to travel to Church during winter storms.**

### **Worldwide Marriage Encounter has gone "Virtual"!**

To support married couples during this time of social distancing, Worldwide Marriage Encounter is sponsoring a virtual marriage experience called **Restore – Rekindle – Renew**. This Enrichment Experience meets via Zoom. For more information or to apply, call John and Toni Torio at 718-344-3700 or visit them at <https://www.mema.org/>.



Out of respect for the Lord and in consideration of fellow parishioners, please remember to silence or turn off your cell phones during Mass. Thank you!

## ✠ PARISH TITHING ✠

**Our Parish needs to take in \$9700.00 each week in order to make ends meet.** This amount represents an adjusted budget offertory of \$8500.00 per week plus the combination of budgeted Property and Fuel second collections (\$4800.00 per month divided into 4 weeks or \$1200.00 weekly). Your weekly contribution helps ensure that the Parish remains a vibrant community. Please remember to submit your weekly gift even if you will be away. Consider signing up for electronic giving (see below). Especially in these trying times, your Parish depends on your responsible stewardship and support!

**January 10, 2021**

<b>Offertory</b>	<b>\$13,923.79</b>
<b>Seminarian Fund</b>	<b>\$ 1,187.00</b>



Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish uses **Parish Giving** to provide parishioners with an opportunity to make your offertory and other contributions through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Parish Giving is a simple, secure, and convenient way to manage your stewardship without weekly envelopes and without worries. This program is available to parishioners at no cost. Log on to the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish website at <http://stlukenh.org>, click on the Parish Giving logo, and follow the easy registration instructions.

### UPCOMING SECOND & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

January 17	Fuel
January 24	No Second Collection
January 31	No Second Collection
February 7	Property Management
February 14	Catholic Schools
February 17	Aid to Churches-East. Europe
February 21	Fuel

### Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on Income

Annual Income	5% Commitment annually/ weekly	3% Commitment annually/ weekly
\$100,000	\$5,000/ <b>\$100</b>	\$3,000/ <b>\$60</b>
\$75,000	\$3,750/ <b>\$75</b>	\$2,250/ <b>\$45</b>
\$60,000	\$3,000/ <b>\$60</b>	\$1,800/ <b>\$36</b>
\$50,000	\$2,500/ <b>\$50</b>	\$1,500/ <b>\$30</b>
\$40,000	\$2,000/ <b>\$40</b>	\$1,200/ <b>\$24</b>
\$30,000	\$1,500/ <b>\$30</b>	\$900/ <b>\$18</b>
\$25,000	\$1,250/ <b>\$25</b>	\$750/ <b>\$15</b>
\$15,000	\$750/ <b>\$15</b>	\$450/ <b>\$9</b>

### Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on a Percentage Increase

Your Current Offertory Contribution	25% Increase	30% Increase	40% Increase
\$75.00	\$93.75	\$97.50	\$105.00
\$50.00	\$62.50	\$65.00	\$70.00
\$40.00	\$50.00	\$52.00	\$56.00
\$35.00	\$43.75	\$45.50	\$49.00
\$30.00	\$37.50	\$39.00	\$42.00
\$25.00	\$31.25	\$32.50	\$35.00
\$20.00	\$25.00	\$26.00	\$28.00
\$15.00	\$18.75	\$19.50	\$21.00
\$10.00	\$12.50	\$13.00	\$14.00
\$5.00	\$6.25	\$6.50	\$7.00

## ✠ PARISH NEWS ✠

### From the Pastor's Desk



#### HOLY ANGELS CEMETERY CLOSING

With the end of the Fall season and the coming of the Winter months, **Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow is closed from December 1, 2020 until Spring 2021.** This decision comes as result of the real dangers of snow and ice in the Cemetery and the costs to Parishioners to inter during the winter months. Please contact the Parish Office with any questions.

#### TAI CHI RETURNS!

The Parish is once again offering Tai Chi classes on **Thursdays at 3:00 PM and at 7:00 PM.** A minimum of three (3) students per class will be needed to hold the class. Social distancing and all COVID-19 protocols, including masks, are required. Contact the Parish Office to register. Tai Chi is the ancient Chinese martial art that is used for meditation, exercise, balance, and mind and body wellness. St. Luke the Evangelist Parish is offering this form of graceful, slow movement to help parishioners to gain strength, to improve their balance, flexibility, and range-of-motion, and to relieve stress. Classes are taught by members of the Oriental Healing Arts Association – a Senior Friendly and Senior Safe Tai Chi Program with the purpose of bringing Tai Chi to all age groups.

#### COVID VACCINE CONCERNS

Beware of fake news! There are reports that call into question the moral and ethical validity of Covid-19 vaccines. Do not be misled. **Right click** on the following tab and **open** the hyperlink to read what the Bishops of the Unites States are saying about the moral permissibility of the current Covid-19 vaccines: [Click Here for the Memo](#)

#### STOVE TO A GOOD HOME

Available: ESA gas cast iron stove heater unit, complete with remote and gas line. Currently in the garage at the house in Newton. Contact Father Albert for information.



#### ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST FOOD PANTRY

Thank you for your generosity towards the hungry of our area!

**Non-perishable food or personal care items are always needed – donations can be dropped off at Church or are welcome at the Parish Office during regular business hours.**

Cash donations for food are always welcome – make checks payable to **St. Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry.** All donations to the Food Pantry go toward helping the needy of our communities. **Call the Pantry at 819-4949 for more information.**

#### COVID-19 IS STILL AROUND!

**The obligation to attend Sunday Liturgy remains suspended in the Diocese of Manchester for all who are health compromised. No person who has been ill or exposed to someone who is ill should be attending Liturgy.**

Anyone who has had recent symptoms of fever, any respiratory symptoms (runny nose, nasal congestion, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath), chills, severe fatigue or changes in sense of smell or taste may have been exposed to COVID-19. Testing is encouraged. Please refrain from attending any liturgical service.

#### Liturgy online or on TV...

**Boston Catholic Television** [catholicstv.org](http://catholicstv.org)

Sunday Mass from Notre Dame

[catholicstv.org/masses/notre-dame-mass](http://catholicstv.org/masses/notre-dame-mass)

Salt & Light TV

[saltandlighttv.org](http://saltandlighttv.org)

Eternal Word Television

[ewtn.com](http://ewtn.com)

#### WHILE AWAY THIS WINTER...

We appreciate all of you who remember to send in your Parish Offertory during the Winter even when on vacation or visiting other parishes. Thank you for remembering that our expenses also continue through the Winter months. We invite others to consider doing the same before or even after you return home.

## SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### ❖ WEEKLY CALENDAR ❖

**Monday, January 18**  
**PARISH OFFICE CLOSED**

**Tuesday, January 19**  
**6:00 PM** Finance Council Meeting **Plaistow**

**Wednesday, January 20**  
Holy Angels Church Plaistow open for  
private prayer all day

**Thursday, January 21**  
**8:30 AM – 8:30 PM** Eucharistic Adoration **Newton**

**Saturday, January 23**  
**3:00 PM** Sacrament of Reconciliation **Plaistow**

Because of COVID restrictions, many Parish events and groups are currently cancelled. We will begin more Parish programs, with all precautions, as restrictions ease.

### PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

In observance of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, the Parish Office will be **closed on Monday, January 18**. The Office will reopen on Tuesday, January 19 at 8:30 AM.



We're looking for new members! Have you ever wondered what the St. Vincent de Paul Society is all about? Our meetings are held on the **3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 7 PM of each month**. New members are always welcome. We look forward to meeting you and answering

any questions you may have. **Please contact SVdP Secretary, Jim Edwards, at (603) 642-5236 or [jimmy69180@hotmail.com](mailto:jimmy69180@hotmail.com) to find out if our meeting is live at the church hall or virtual on ZOOM.** If you seek assistance or need information about the Society, call (603) 382-8324, ext.315. Visit us on our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pg/SVDPSL>.

### AMAZON SMILE

**AmazonSmile.com** is the same market platform as Amazon.com, but with the added benefit of allowing customers to donate 0.5% of the price of items purchased to a charitable organization. Please register today to start shopping and donating at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). For questions, please call the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. Be sure to choose:

**St Luke the Evangelist Parish, Plaistow.**

### ❖ MASS INTENTIONS ❖

**Saturday, January 16 ~ Vigil / 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19; 1 Cor 6:13c-15a; 17-20; Jn 1:35-42**  
**(Vigil)**

**4:00 PM** Mark Hammond by the Brotz family  
**Plaistow**

**Sunday, January 17 ~ Second Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19; 1 Cor 6:13c-15a; 17-20; Jn 1:35-42**

**8:00 AM** Margaret Levitt by Mary Anne Downs  
**Newton**

**10:00 AM** Christopher Butcher by John and Goldie Morrow  
**Plaistow**

**Monday, January 18 ~ Weekday**  
**Heb 5:1-10; Mk 2:18-22**

**8:00 AM** Walter and Leo F. Metcalf by their family  
**Newton**

**Tuesday, January 19 ~ Weekday**  
**Heb 6:10-20; Mk 2:23-28**

**8:00 AM** People of the Parish  
**Plaistow**

**Wednesday, January 20 ~ Fabian, Pope and Martyr;**  
**Sebastian, Martyr**

**Heb 7:1-3, 15-17; Mk 3:1-6**  
**6:30 PM** Mark Hammond by Walter and Joanne Lord  
**Plaistow**

**Thursday, January 21 ~ Agnes, Virgin and Martyr**  
**Heb 7:25—8:6; Mk 3:7-12**

**8:00 AM** People of the Parish  
**Newton**

**Friday, January 22 ~ Day of Prayer for the Legal**  
**Protection of Unborn Children**

**Heb 8:6-13; Mk 3:13-19**  
**No Mass**

**Saturday, January 23 ~ Margaret Cope, Virgin and Martyr**  
**Vincent, Deacon and Martyr**

**Heb 9:2-3, 11-14; Mk 3:20-21 (Day)**  
**Jon 3:1-5, 10; 1 Cor 7:29-31; Mk 1:14-20 (Vigil)**  
**4:00 PM** Michael Sullivan by Talia  
**Plaistow**

**Sunday, January 24 ~ Third Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**Jon 3:1-5, 10; 1 Cor 7:29-31; Mk 1:14-20**

**8:00 AM** The Intentions of Paul Fournier  
by Edith Fournier  
**Newton**  
**10:00 AM** Mary Morrill by the Parish  
**Plaistow**

### PRAYER LINE

St. Luke's offers a prayer line as a resource for those seeking prayer assistance. To submit your prayer request please call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 314 or email her at [csmith@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net).



## ✠ FAITH FORMATION & PARISH INFORMATION ✠

### DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE UNBORN

St. Michael Parish's Respect Life Ministry invites you to a Day of Prayer for the Unborn.

In lieu of traveling to the March for Life during COVID, they are hosting Mass and Adoration for the parishes of the Seacoast Deanery.

**January 23, 2021**

8:00 AM Mass followed by Adoration until 11:30 AM

St. Michael Parish  
9 Lincoln Street  
Exeter, NH 03833

Come for the Rosary, Litany of Life, and  
Personal Prayer time



The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the process by which people become members of the Roman Catholic Church. Be a good agent of welcome and evangelization! If you or someone you know is interested in inquiring about becoming a member of the Roman Catholic Church, contact Cathy Smith in the Parish Office.

### ADULT CONFIRMATION

Are you an adult who has been Baptized and received Eucharist, but has not celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation? The adult Confirmation process is an opportunity to complete the Sacraments of Initiation. If you would like to prepare for Confirmation, or if you have questions, call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at

[csmith@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net).



### CREIGHTON FERTILITYCARE SYSTEM

The Creighton FertilityCare System is a highly effective and morally acceptable natural method of family planning. It is healthy and strengthens marriage. It is used to achieve a pregnancy or avoid a pregnancy and can be useful in the diagnosis and treatment of reproductive disease. Online introductory classes will be held on the first Wednesday and third Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM. For more information, contact Mary Menendez, CFCP, St. Gerard Majella FertilityCare Services, at 603-642-8050 or [CreightonFertility@yahoo.com](mailto:CreightonFertility@yahoo.com).



St. Luke the Evangelist is now on Facebook! Go to [www.facebook.com/stlukenh.org/](http://www.facebook.com/stlukenh.org/) or **St. Luke the Evangelist Parish – Newton/Plaistow** and give us a Like! Please invite fellow parishioners & friends to do the same.

### ADORATION

We are truly blessed to have times for Adoration of Our Lord in our Parish. This time of prayer and intercession is not only a source of great grace for the individual, but it is a great source of grace for us as a parish family, as well.

We have many who have made the commitment to spend an hour each week with our Eucharistic Lord, **but** we need more people so there will be at least two people at each hour. We are also looking for people who would be able to substitute.

**Newton – Thursday  
8:30 AM – 8:30 PM**

If you can commit to one hour a week in Adoration of our Lord, or if you can be a substitute, please contact Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at [csmith@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net).

**The Church in Plaistow is open all day on  
Wednesdays for people to stop by and pray  
before the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.**

## ✠ PARISH DIRECTORY ✠

Parish Office	603-382-8324
Parish Prayer Line	603-382-8324 x 314
St. Vincent de Paul Society	603-382-8324 x 315
St. Luke's Food Pantry	603-819-4949
Preschool	603-382-9783
Presentation of Mary Convent	603-382-2744

Fr. Albert Tremblay	<a href="mailto:fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net">fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Cathy Smith	<a href="mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net">csmith@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Joyce Szapa	<a href="mailto:jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net">jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Jackie Tremblay	<a href="mailto:jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net">jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Val Barczak	<a href="mailto:mvmbarczak@comcast.net">mvmbarczak@comcast.net</a>
Parish Council	<a href="mailto:parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net">parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net</a>

✠ Parish News ~ Youth News ~ Around The Diocese ✠



The Knights of Columbus  
invite you to join them on  
**Thursday January 21 and 28 at 7:00 PM**  
at Mary Mother of the Church in Newton  
to participate in the  
9 DAYS FOR LIFE Novena and Rosary.  
Participants will be provided with  
a copy of the novena or you can subscribe to  
[www.9daysforlife.com](http://www.9daysforlife.com).



**KNIGHTS of COLUMBUS  
ST. JUDE COUNCIL #6617**

**ONLINE BEREAVEMENT GROUP**  
**CATHOLIC CHARITIES NH**

Have you recently lost a spouse, family member or friends, and are struggling with grief and loss? Catholic Charities NH will be hosting its next online support group, **"Bereavement – Experiencing Loss, Being Lost, and Finding Your Way Again."** This is a six-part series helping participants learn about the dynamics of grief, discover new ways to cope while healing, and gain the opportunity to be supported and support others also sharing a painful journey. Sessions will be held on **Thursdays (January 28 to March 4) from 3:30 to 4:30 PM**. To register, visit [www.cc-nh.org/beravement](http://www.cc-nh.org/beravement).



The Sanctuary Candle in  
Mary, Mother of the Church  
will burn this week  
in loving memory of  
**Moses and Ellen Tucker**  
by William Tucker

**FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT**

If you would like an "end of year" financial statement of your contribution to the parish for 2020, please **call Jackie** at the Parish Office at 382-8324. **Financial Statements are issued on a request only basis.**

**FROM THE PARISH FOOD PANTRY:**

So many thanks, so much gratitude! Going into this Christmas season, we were not sure what to expect for requests for help from families for food, for gifts or what we would be able to do during this strained and stressful COVID time. On the negative side of COVID, more people are out of work, underemployed, and unemployed causing budgets to be strained and more families depending on the pantry resources for food and gifts. On the positive side, our parish and community stepped up and responded with much compassion and generosity. Joe and I, and our incredibly dedicated group of volunteers, are so very grateful for your support. I have a favorite quote, "Where God guides, He provides." And provide He did! Through the pantry, we provided 191 families and seniors with dinners and/or a Christmas meal. With your help and the help of others who helped to fill gift requests, we were able to provide 119 kids with gifts for Christmas. The families were very grateful and appreciative for the help they were able to receive.

A special thank you for the generous help we received in filling the gift requests goes to the people in our community who dropped by and offered to help, the parishioners of St Luke the Evangelist Parish, the Atkinson Congregational Church and the ROCK Church in Plaistow, Sweet Hill Farms in Plaistow, the Knights of Columbus #6617, and the Atkinson Lions Club who took tags or gift lists to fill. To our many volunteers who work with us every week and at the holidays to sort, pack and distribute food orders so that we can have a COVID safe no contact food distribution, student volunteers from Central Catholic High School in Lawrence who come to us as extra helpers during the holiday seasons, to Matt Matson who spent many hours on the phone contacting all of the families to set up an organized pickup and delivery schedule, to the Plaistow and Atkinson Lions who helped deliver the food baskets to families who could not get to us, and to all those who so generously donated money and food to our pantry during the holiday seasons and throughout this COVID crisis, a sincere thank you. We are truly very blessed. "Together we can make a Difference!"

Joe and Marie Farren  
St Luke's Food Pantry

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

A Men's AA Step Meeting is being held on Sunday mornings from 7:00 to 8:00 AM at the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish Hall (Holy Angels). Masks are required. Bring your own coffee. For more information, call Joe at 617-921-9899.



# Do Something for Lent. Renew your faith.

**Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021!** This Lent, Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish invites all to renew their faith by participating in the Church's annual retreat time of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

This year we are pleased to, once again, utilize the **"Disciples on The Journey"** for our text.

What is the Lenten Journey about?

**It is about prayer!** Today we begin with prayer as our 2021 Lenten Journey program gets underway. Begin to pray in an active way about the upcoming Lenten season. Ask for the Spirit's guidance as you consider your involvement; pray that our Parish's Lenten Journey through the desert be blessed.

**Consider a small group!** Groups meet during Lent to discuss the upcoming Lenten Sunday Readings, and to share member's experiences of discipleship. We will use a text that follows the Sunday Lenten readings published by the Office of Catechetical Ministry of the Diocese of Victoria, TX. Adults, Families and Youth will learn more about Scripture, participate in interesting discussions, meet some wonderful people, and have the opportunity to build up the Body of Christ. FREE Teen AND Family downloads are available for **Disciples on the Journey** by visiting [www.disciplesonthejourney.org](http://www.disciplesonthejourney.org) El web-site para *Disciples on the Journey* proporciona secciones adicionales gratis para jóvenes y familia.



**What else?** During Lent, special *Paschal Mission* inserts in the weekly bulletin will focus on the Lenten Scriptures and on discipleship in the real world. Sunday Homilies will touch on living Jesus' Gospel and on the questions discussed at Group meetings.

**Small Group sign-ups begin next weekend, January 24!  
Registration Forms will be in the bulletin.**

**Group Meetings begin the week of February 14!  
Meetings will take place in person in the church hall,  
and one meeting will also be virtual on ZOOM.**

**Masks must be worn at all times; social distancing policies will be observed.**

# The Gospel at Home

## This Sunday's Gospel: John 1:35–42

In this Sunday's Gospel, John the Baptist points to Jesus as "the Lamb of God." The Gospel also tells of the call of the first disciples. The story echoes the call of each member of the Church—to share in the mission of Jesus, his joy, and his sufferings. The title "Lamb of God" links Jesus to the symbol of Israel's redemption—the Paschal Lamb.

### Exploring the Gospel Message

**Seeds (Preschool):** This week's lesson emphasizes listening to the sounds around us. Children also need adults who will listen to them. Ask your child what barnyard sounds were heard in the lesson's story about Mark. Discuss the different things we hear and listen to at Mass. Talk about how hard it can be to listen to others.

**Promise (Grades K–1):** This week, your child explored the experience of having friends among family, schoolmates, and neighbors. Your child learned how Jesus made friends and gathered followers. Ask your child to show the story cutout he or she made in class and tell how all of us are connected to one another and to Jesus.

**Good News (Grades 2–3):** This week, your child learned about the Liturgy of the Word at Mass. Ask your child to tell you about this part of the Mass. The family can also play together the "Jesus, Come and See!" game. Talk about ways your family can show that you are followers of Jesus.

**Venture (Grades 4–6):** The class learned about one of the Church's more recently canonized saints, Pope Saint John XXIII, and how he helped to renew and change the Church. Ask your child to tell you about Saint John. The class also discussed vocations and learned that everyone has a call from God. Some are called to serve in a special way. Talk about the vocations to the priesthood, sisterhood, and brotherhood and others who serve. Discuss that marriage is also a very special call from God.

**Visions (Grades 7–8):** This week's lesson focused on God's call—a person's vocation. The young people discussed the various ways people live out their Christian vocation. Ask your son or daughter to share with the family the story of Jesuit Father Rutilio Grande, whose defense of the poor led to his death. Talk about ways your family can be good and true disciples of Jesus and what it means to live a holy life. Talk, too, about helping one another discover what God's calling is for each of you.

### Pray Together

When you complete your conversation about the week's Gospel lesson, try to join in a morning prayer or an evening prayer together each day for a week. The prayer does not have to be formal or structured, and it certainly does not need to be long. Pray together in your own words, too, that God will call good leaders and ministers for the Church and that each member of your family will be open to listening to God's call and answering with a resounding yes!







# Bringing Home the Word

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

January 17, 2021

## What's in a Name?

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

In Giorgio Vasari's painting, *The Calling of St. Peter and St. Andrew*, the upper scene shows Peter and Andrew walking toward Jesus. The lower central scene depicts Peter in the center, with Andrew behind him, and Jesus enthroned on a rock pointing toward him.

The scene is simple for a reason. Jesus' call is simple: Follow me. Our response should be simple, too. We often complicate the call with questions, fears, or doubts, wanting clarifications and assurances. But it is a simple imperative that requires a one-word answer: yes or no. Or as Samuel responded, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:9).

## Sunday Readings

### 1 Samuel 3:3b–10, 19

So [Eli] said to Samuel, "Go to sleep, and if you are called, reply, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'"

### 1 Corinthians 6:13c–15a, 17–20

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit within you?

### John 1:35–42

[Jesus said,] "You are Simon the son of John; you will be called Cephas (which is translated Peter)."

Once accepted, the call implies a new identity born of a new, deeper relationship. When Jesus calls Simon, he changes his name. In the Bible, a name change indicates a new mission or purpose. Abram was renamed Abraham to father the Old Testament people in faith.

Simon is now Cephas, or rock. His mission is to father the New Testament people in faith. He is to be a solid, unbreakable foundation for his brothers—and eventually the whole Church. His strength comes not from perfection, for we know Peter was weak, but from his acceptance of Jesus' love and call no matter his own weakness.

Similarly, in baptism and confirmation we take new names that come with our new, deeper calls. It is a meaningful Catholic tradition that parents name their children after a saint who becomes a model for their lives. Like Peter, we are called to greatness by Jesus, who looks at us, names us, and says, "Follow me" (John 1:43). Let's live up to that beautiful, simple invitation! +

*Jesus' call is simple:  
Follow me. Our response  
should be simple, too:  
yes or no.*

## A Word from Pope Francis

Jesus does not want disciples who are merely able to repeat memorized formulas. He wants witnesses: people who spread hope, with their way of welcoming, smiling, and loving; above all loving because the power of the resurrection makes Christians capable of loving even when love seems to have lost its motivation.

—General Audience, October 4, 2017



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Are you named after a saint or someone in particular?
- If so, how does that saint or person inspire you?



# The Church on Cremation

By Fr. Bruce Lewandowski, CSsR

Catholics have loved relics for centuries. Although you may not realize it, the altar where Mass is celebrated usually contains an altar stone with the relic of a saint in it. It's common on saints' feast days to visit their graves or venerate their relics and be blessed with them. Is it possible to connect this adoration of relics to how we commemorate the death of our loved ones?

- Upon my entry to greet a third-grade class, a little girl's hand shot up with a sense of urgency. I couldn't avoid calling on her. "My grandma died," she reported matter-of-factly. Stunned, I responded with, "I'm sure she's in a good place, and one day you'll see her again." The girl answered instantly: "I know she is. I saw her this morning. Her ashes are on our kitchen table."
- Siblings are in turmoil over the sale of their childhood home. A few years ago they fulfilled their mother's dying wish by spreading her cremated remains in the backyard flower garden. They never dreamed they would have to sell the family home. Should they tell the prospective buyers?
- Another family placed their mother's ashes in small lockets on gold chains that can be worn. They distributed them to their mother's dearest relatives and friends at her memorial service.



- A father's cremated remains were divided between his two children. He has two burial plots, one in a cemetery in Philadelphia and one in Brazil, his home country.

I'm sure you've heard similar stories about cremations and the distribution of a loved one's ashes. Reactions are either extremely positive or negative. It seems no one is indifferent on the subject. What does the Church say?

Catholic teaching on this is clear. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, "The Church permits cremation, provided that it does not demonstrate a denial of faith in the resurrection of the body" (CCC 2301). Furthermore, the

Church usually has clear instructions reflecting the US Conference of Catholic Bishops' guidelines about the placement of the cremated remains in a cemetery or place of respect, such as a mausoleum.

The Catholic News Service reported that "Catholic cemeteries have lost 1 percent of their potential business each year since the Second Vatican Council relaxed burial and cremation restrictions." Many parishes have opened their own columbariums.

More and more, it seems cremation is prevailing over the tradition of burial. This is a leap, but maybe our fascination with relics has predisposed us to this latest trend. If we desire to be close to saints we've never met, how much more will we desire to stay close to those we love and have known for a lifetime, even when they've gone home to God? It's important that we understand and uphold the Church's teaching on the subject. +

***Does our fascination  
with relics predispose us  
to choose cremation?***

**PRAYER**

***Lord, draw me close to your heart  
that I may come to know and  
love you more deeply.***

—From *Peaceful Meditations for Every Day  
in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage  
and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

January 18–23

**Monday, Weekday:**  
Heb 5:1–10 / Mk 2:18–22


**Tuesday, Weekday:**  
Heb 6:10–20 / Mk 2:23–28

**Wednesday, Weekday:**  
Heb 7:1–3, 15–17 / Mk 3:1–6

**Thursday, St. Agnes:**  
Heb 7:25–8:6 / Mk 3:7–12

**Friday, Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection  
of Unborn Children:** Heb 8:6–13 / Mk 3:13–19

**Saturday, Weekday:**  
Heb 9:2–3, 11–14 / Mk 3:20–21

Bringing Home  
the **Word**   
January 17, 2021

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