

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 31, 2021

Offertory

\$7,620.48



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

February 7	Property Management
February 14	Catholic Schools
February 17	Aid to Churches-East. Europe
February 21	Fuel
February 28	Easter Flowers
March 7	Property Management
March 14	CRS & Home Missions

Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on Income

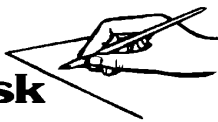
Annual Income	5% Commitment annually/ weekly	3% Commitment annually/ weekly
\$100,000	\$5,000/\$100	\$3,000/\$60
\$75,000	\$3,750/\$75	\$2,250/\$45
\$60,000	\$3,000/\$60	\$1,800/\$36
\$50,000	\$2,500/\$50	\$1,500/\$30
\$40,000	\$2,000/\$40	\$1,200/\$24
\$30,000	\$1,500/\$30	\$900/\$18
\$25,000	\$1,250/\$25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

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.

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](#)

NEWTON CHURCH CLOSED

The Church in Newton has been temporarily closed because of a problem with the heating system. We are working on a solution to return heat via a temporary fix as soon as possible.

The liturgical schedule of the Parish will remain in place, except that **ALL Liturgies will be celebrated at Plaistow** beginning on February 2. Thursday Eucharistic Adoration at Newton is suspended for the foreseeable future.

Please check our Parish website at stlukenh.org or call the Parish Office for updates.

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.

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 catholictv.org

Sunday Mass from Notre Dame

catholictv.org/masses/notre-dame-mass

Salt & Light TV

saltandlighttv.org

Eternal Word Television

ewtn.com



FEED THE HUNGRY

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.**

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.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

Wednesday, February 10
Holy Angels Church Plaistow open for
private prayer all day

Thursday, February 11
NO ADORATION IN NEWTON
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Saturday, February 13
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.

BLESSING OF COUPLES

There will be a special blessing of couples at the conclusion of all Liturgies on the weekend of **February 13-14**. Please pray for those married among us and remember those preparing to be married as well.



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 **3rd 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 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. For questions, please call the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. Be sure to choose:

St Luke the Evangelist Parish, Plaistow.

✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

Saturday, February 6 ~ Vigil / 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jb 7:1-4, 6-7; 1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23; Mk 1:29-39 (Vigil)
4:00 PM Nicholas J. Cedrone by Ed and Susan Martin
Plaistow

Sunday, February 7 ~ Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jb 7:1-4, 6-7; 1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23; Mk 1:29-39
8:00 AM Jack Ronan by Janice Bettencourt
Plaistow
10:00 AM Carl Jesionowski by his family
Plaistow

Monday, February 8 ~ Jerome Emiliani; Josephine Bakhita, Virgin

Gn 1:1-19; Mk 6:53-56
8:00 AM Jack Ronan by Jackie Tremblay
Plaistow

Tuesday, February 9 ~ Weekday

Gn 1:20—2:4a; Mk 7:1-13
8:00 AM Brian Plante (Month's Mind)
Plaistow

Wednesday, February 10 ~ Scholastica, Virgin

Gn 2:4b-9, 15-17; Mk 7:14-23
6:30 PM For Michael and his recovery
Plaistow

Thursday, February 11 ~ Our Lady of Lourdes

Gn 2:18-25; Mk 7:24-30
8:00 AM People of the Parish
Plaistow

Friday, February 12 ~ Weekday

Gn 3:1-8; Mk 7:31-37
No Mass

Saturday, February 13 ~ Weekday

Gn 3:9-14; Mk 8:1-10 (Day)
Lv 13:1-2, 44-46; 1 Cor 10:31—11:1; Mk 1:40-45 (Vigil)
4:00 PM Ben and Irene Zakiewicz
by Pat Zakiewicz
Plaistow

Sunday, February 14 ~ Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lv 13:1-2, 44-46; 1 Cor 10:31—11:1; Mk 1:40-45
8:00 AM Joan Burge by the Burge family
Plaistow
10:00 AM Jack Ronan by Barbara and Victor Pierimarchi
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.

✠ FAITH FORMATION & PARISH INFORMATION ✠

VIRTUAL MARDI GRAS TO BENEFIT CATHOLIC CHARITIES NH

You are invited to be a part of the Virtual Mardi Gras Celebration! This annual signature event benefits Catholic Charities NH and the hundreds of individuals and families in need that they support. And being online this year, it's easier to join in on the fun. Register today at www.cc-nh.org/mardigras for a chance to win prizes, bid on auction items, and more. The event will be streamed on **February 16** (Fat Tuesday) on www.cc-nh.org. Call Rosemary at 603-663-0249 with any questions.



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.



St. Luke the Evangelist is now on Facebook! Go to 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.



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.

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.

**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	fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net
Cathy Smith	csmith@stluketheevangelist.net
Joyce Szapa	jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
Jackie Tremblay	jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
Val Barczak	mvmbarczak@comcast.net
Parish Council	parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net

✠ **Parish News ~ Youth News ~ Around The Diocese** ✠

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
ST JUDE COUNCIL # 6617
GIVE YOUR PARISH COMMUNITY
1 HOUR A MONTH**

The Knights of Columbus are a vital and vibrant part of the St Luke the Evangelist Parish. We welcome any practicing Catholic man 18 or older to join the Knights, whose main purpose is charitable works in support of our parish and community. Joining is simple – talk to a brother Knight or you can now join on-line. Go to www.kofc.org/joinus. Your Council is involved in many activities from collecting money for people with intellectual disabilities through the Tootsie Roll Drive to the annual St Jude Golf Open which raises money for parish families in need. The list is as long as you want it to be. Do you have a certain passion you would like to get involved in? Come join us and make it a reality! We are Catholic men. We live by principles informed by faith. We are sons, fathers, husbands, and grandfathers. Join us on life's greatest adventure to. **Feel free to call Dan Sullivan at 603-770-4803, email him at dans49@comcast.net, or catch him at the 8:00 AM Sunday Mass in Newton. For more information about the Knights, visit:**

www.kofc.org/un/en/todays-knights/what-we-do.html

**ONLINE BEREAVEMENT GROUP
CATHOLIC CHARITIES NH**

For those still struggling to manage daily life with the COVID-19 crisis, Catholic Charities NH is hosting another "Coping with COVID" online support group for parishioners across the Diocese. The free five-session program, held on Zoom, provides key information and coping strategies to help you navigate these challenging and uncertain times. You'll connect with members of the medical and mental health communities and gain valuable relaxation techniques, among other forms of support. Sessions will be held on **Wednesdays (2:00 to 3:00 PM) starting February 3 through March 3**. To register, visit www.cc-nh.org/berereavement.

FOR OUR RECORDS

We need your help to keep our records current. If there are any births, deaths, marriages, moves, or address changes in your family, please notify the Parish Office at 603-382-8324 or by email at jtremlay@stluketheevangelist.net. If you are new to our parish, registration forms are available at the entrances of both churches. You can also find a registration form on our website at <http://stlukenh.org>.

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.**

HELP WANTED TO PUT AWAY TREES

With Lent fast approaching, volunteers are welcome to help prepare the churches on **Sunday, February 14 following the 10:00 AM Liturgy in Plaistow**. Our tasks include taking down our green trees and some light clean up of the churches in preparation for the Lenten season. All are welcome to lend a hand – our work usually lasts just over an hour if we have all the help we can muster! Please contact the Parish Office for more information – or just stay after Mass!

The Sanctuary Candle in
Mary, Mother of the Church
will burn this week
in loving memory of
Michael and Mary Edwards
by Jim Edwards



The Sanctuary Candle in
Holy Angels Church
will burn this week
in loving memory of
Paul Antkowiak
by his family

VIGIL LIGHT

The Vigil Light in front of the
Blessed Mother Icon
at Mary Mother of the Church
will burn in loving memory of
Jack Ronan
by Dan Sullivan



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.

What is the **Lenten Journey** all about? Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are called the “three pillars” of the Christian way of life. They help support a full and healthy life. During Lent we try to repair and strengthen these three pillars, which also are called the “three disciplines” because they help people become better disciples of the Lord. Our **Lenten Journey** program helps Discipleship!

Lenten Journey is about SMALL GROUPS... IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO SIGN-UP! We continue to welcome sign-ups for small groups. **On the back of this flyer is a REGISTRATION FORM. Return the form by Monday, February 8th at the office, or call the office at 382-8324.**



Meetings begin next week! Groups meet six times during the Lenten season to discuss the Lenten Sunday Lectionary readings. You will learn more about Scripture through the resource book provided, participate in interesting discussions, meet some wonderful people and have the opportunity to build up the Body of Christ.

**All group members will pick up their resource booklets
at the first meeting.**

Groups begin meeting NEXT WEEK!

Wednesday, February 17, at 4:00 p.m. downstairs in the Church Hall.

Wednesday, February 17, 7:00 p.m. after the 6:30 p.m. Mass downstairs in the Church Hall.

Thursday, February 18, at 1:30 p.m. downstairs in the Church Hall and virtual on ZOOM.

FAMILY AND TEEN DOWNLOADS: www.disciplesonthejourney.org

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

Ash Wednesday is next Wednesday, February 17!

DISCIPLES ON THE JOURNEY REGISTRATION FORM



Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

E-Mail _____ Cell Phone _____

Please check the time and day you prefer

Wednesday Afternoons in the Church Hall at 4:00 p.m. ____
(February 17 – March 24)

Wednesday Evenings in the Church Hall at 7:00 p.m. ____
(February 17 – March 24)

Thursday Afternoons in the Church Hall at 1:30 p.m. ____
(February 18 – March 25)

Thursday Afternoons at 1:30 p.m. virtual on ZOOM ____
(February 18 – March 25)

Group meetings begin the week of February 14

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

**(Please return this form in the collection basket or bring to the
parish office)**

The Gospel at Home

This Sunday's Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

Jesus brings God's life-giving, healing power to the people of Galilee. The Gospel portrays Jesus as a man of action who raises up Peter's mother-in-law, heals the sick, and frees the possessed. He also seeks time to pray. We are all called to imitate Jesus' compassion and love for people.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Seeds (Preschool): People of all ages love and follow Jesus. This week, your child discussed places where we often gather. Talk about what your child likes to do with other people. Share great experiences of gathering, such as church or concerts. Remind your child that Jesus is always with us.

Promise (Grades K-1): Your child learned in class that he or she can be of help to others. Talk together about ways the members of your family help one another. Ask your child to share the story "Ben and the Sad Face" with the family. Talk, too, about ways Jesus helped people from this week's Gospel reading.

Good News (Grades 2-3): Your child learned about Saint Martin de Porres. Ask your child to share his story with the family. Your child learned the names of all Seven Sacraments. Ask him or her to describe what a sacrament is and see if he or she can name all seven. The class also learned and more about the Gospel of Saint Mark. Let everyone in the family look at the little booklet your child put together in class. Let your child share what he or she learned about Mark's Gospel.

Venture (Grades 4-6): This week, your child learned about the healing ministry of Jesus. Your child also learned about the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick—the sacrament that brings help and healing to people suffering from illness. Examine your family's attitude toward people who are sick and explore ways that you can make a difference in the lives of people who are hurting. Ask your young one who Saint Josephine Bakhita was.

Visions (Grades 7-9): During this week's class, your son or daughter discovered how Jesus calls all to discipleship. The class also discovered how to handle conflicts and how people working together can make a real difference in the world and can inspire others. Talk about needs in your neighborhood or community that can be met by your family reaching out to help. Ask your young person to share what the class learned about resolving conflict.

Pray Together

When you complete your conversation about Sunday's Gospel lesson, create a family litany for people who are suffering from illness or who are struggling in life. Let members of the family take turns mentioning the name of a person who is in need. After each name, the family can respond, "Lord, make haste to help them." When the family runs out of names, close by saying the Lord's Prayer together.





The Society of St. Vincent DePaul, at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, invites you to join our Prayer Shawl Ministry! Even if you are unable to attend meetings, your talents are more than welcome.

Shawls can be made with yarn, quilt fabric, or fleece. They are filled with prayer, care and love. They will be given to anyone in need of comfort or solace.

If you are interested in prayerful camaraderie or just want to contribute your talent, consider joining our committee.

If you know of someone that is in need of comfort and would like to receive a gift from our group, please call to make the request.

Barbara Metcalf

603-642-8334

cmbklb@yahoo.com

Meeting Schedule:

- First Thursday of each month, except July and August.
- 10 A.M. – 12 Noon
- Parish office building (dining room)
- Material can be supplied

We are honored to provide this service to anyone in need.



Bringing Home the Word

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

February 7, 2021

Offering the Gospel to All

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

If you asked Jesus what he did while on earth, I believe he would say, “preached and healed.” Those were his missions. He had good news to share and a longing to convince his listeners of the truth of this gospel of love and freedom. He was moved because he saw them like sheep without a shepherd. The Gospels are nothing other than documentation of Jesus’ efforts to preach the gospel.

Paul shared Christ’s ardor. He was entrusted with preaching to the Gentiles the truth of the Gospel, and he did all he could to convince them of his message.

He says he became all things to all, to save at least some. He worked hard during the day so he could pay his own way and offer his message for free. He adapted himself to his audience—their customs and ways of thinking—so they wouldn’t take offense at him, closing their hearts to his message.

How many missionaries have used this same approach? Just think of the French Jesuits Sts. Jean de Brébeuf and Isaac Jogues of the Great Lakes region, St. Junípero Serra in the West, or Mother Cabrini serving European immigrants on the East Coast. They learned new languages, ate new foods, and adopted new traditions to insert themselves into these cultures and share the gospel. They took a page out of Paul’s book, becoming all things to all to save at least some.

We are modern-day apostles and missionaries. Let’s take a page out of Paul’s book, and offer this gospel of hope and love to so many souls in need. +

Sunday Readings

Job 7:1–4, 6–7

Is not life on earth a drudgery, / its days like those of a hireling?

1 Corinthians 9:16–19, 22–23

If I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been imposed on me.

Mark 1:29–39

[Jesus said,] “Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come.”

***Paul adapted himself
to his audience’s customs
and ways of thinking
so they wouldn’t take
offense at him.***

A Word from Pope Francis

Jesus sends his disciples out to all nations....We too were part of all those people of two thousand years ago. Jesus did not provide a short list of who is, or is not, worthy of receiving his message and his presence. Instead, he always embraced life as he saw it.

—Canonization of Fr. Junípero Serra,
September 23, 2015



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- When you look around, what needs for the gospel of love do you see?
- Which of these needs can you fill as Jesus’ apostle?

In the Divine Potter's Hands

By Johan van Parys

My father was a great storyteller. Every night he read from the Bible. He had the talent to depict biblical scenes in such a way that we could see them unfold in our minds' eyes.

I clearly remember the night he read the creation story to us. Though I loved all the other stories, I was mostly intrigued by the creation of Adam. I visualized God collecting the clay before lovingly molding Adam and blowing life into him. This image of God as primordial potter molded and shaped *me* as well.

There is something wholesome, something sacred, about pottery. Pottery is about clay, and clay is about soil—in Adam's case, primordial soil.

Pottery, of course, is not only about clay; it also bears the imprint of the potter's hands. A potter takes the clay and judges its quality and its consistency. She carefully places a lump of clay on the potter's wheel and starts spinning it. She works the clay with her skillful hands as the undefined mass of clay takes shape, never giving up on the clay, starting over until she is pleased with the result.

As every cup bears the imprint of its maker's hands, so each member of the human race bears the imprint of the Divine Potter's hands. But unlike a cup, which can't be changed once it's fired, humans can be reshaped. God shaped humans in his own image, and he continues to mold and remold us.



In the sacred liturgy, we're molded and remolded by God; this is our time to worship and God's time to shape.

During the celebration of the liturgy, God molds us into the Body of Christ. The liturgy is the divine hands, and we are the clay. Sunday after Sunday, we're shaped and reshaped. In liturgy upon liturgy, God focuses and refocuses us on what is right. During our ongoing catechesis, we have the opportunity to learn more about what God has in mind for us as it is revealed to us through Scripture and Tradition. The goal, of course, is to go into the world and do what is right in the eyes of God.

Any potter knows it's difficult to

create the perfect shape and that it takes a long time to get it just right. Similarly, becoming a good Christian isn't an easy task. It takes a lifelong commitment to celebrate the liturgy and to engage in learning so we can live a truly Christian life. However, thanks to God's persistence and unfailing commitment to keep shaping and reshaping us, one day we'll be molded into perfect shape as members of the Body of Christ. +

Unlike a cup, which can't be changed once it is fired, humans can be reshaped.

PRAYER

*Lord, you hear the cry of the poor.
Hear my cry for inner peace and happiness.*

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

WEEKDAY READINGS

February 8–13

Monday, Weekday:

Gn 1:1–19 / Mk 6:53–56

Tuesday, Weekday:

Gn 1:20–2:4a / Mk 7:1–13

Wednesday, St. Scholastica:

Gn 2:4b–9, 15–17 / Mk 7:14–23

Thursday, Weekday:


Gn 2:18–25 / Mk 7:24–30

Friday, Weekday:

Gn 3:1–8 / Mk 7:31–37

Saturday, Weekday:

Gn 3:9–24 / Mk 8:1–10

Bringing Home
the **Word** 
February 7, 2021

© 2021 Liguori Publications, a ministry of the Redemptorists. One Liguori Drive, Liguori, MO 63057. Scripture quotations in this publication are from the *New American Bible*, revised edition, © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, DC. The Pope Francis quotation is used with permission and copyright © 2020 *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*. All rights reserved. 1-800-325-9521. Liguori.org.