

MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

Sunday, February 18, 2024

First Sunday Of Lent

Gathering: Hold Us In Your Mercy

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 51)

*Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned;
be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.*

Preparation: Only This I Want BB 505

Mass Parts: Mass For Christ The Savior

Communion: One Love Released BB 333

Recessional: **We depart in silence during Lent**

✠ 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!

**COLLECTION AMOUNTS FOR
FEBRUARY 11, 2024
WILL APPEAR IN NEXT WEEK'S BULLETIN**



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.

You can also use your smart phone to scan the QR code below. The link will take you directly to Parish Giving so you can donate.



UPCOMING SECOND & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

February 18 Fuel
February 25 No Second Collection



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.

PLEASE HELP US!

As you leave church, kindly take your Bulletin with you - or return it to the basket at the entrance of the Church, return your music book and Mass card to their proper place, and pick up after yourself as you leave. Thanks for being attentive and respectful! F. Albert.



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.

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

TAX TIME SUGGESTION

Did you know? If you are 72 or older and need to take a “required minimum distribution (RMD)” from an IRA retirement account, a direct distribution to a qualified charitable organization, such as Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish, can save you money on your taxes. Such a donation will count toward your required minimum distribution but will be excluded from taxable income. Ask your tax preparer or IRA trustee for more details.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

If you would like an “end of year” financial statement of your contributions to the parish for 2023, **please call Jackie** at the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. **Financial Statements are issued on a request only basis.**

RETROUVAILLE

A Lifeline For Married Couples

Does your marriage need help? We are a 3-phase program. We are not just a feel good, get away weekend. We are a marriage program that continues after the initial weekend with follow-up sessions that further develop the concepts that we introduce on the weekend. Some of the topics we cover are: Communication Skills, Conflict Management, Family of Origin, Forgiveness and Trust, Love and Commitment, Marriage as a Vocation, Intimacy and Sexual Relationship. Over 76% of couples are still married to same spouse at the five-year anniversary of their attending a Retrouvaille weekend. Email us at NewEngland@HelpOurMarriage.org or call 508-271-7155. Our next weekend is scheduled for:

**March 1-3, 2024
Tewksbury, MA**

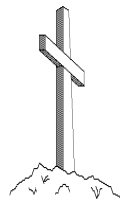
MARRIAGE IN THE CHURCH

Did you know that all Catholics are required to be married in the Church as a condition of the validity of their marriage?

Any Catholic married in a civil ceremony (JP) or in any religious ceremony other than a Catholic one (unless specifically excepted by the Bishop) is not living out the Sacrament of Marriage in its fullness according to the teaching of the Church. Contact Father Albert in the Parish Office for more information and assistance – there are ways in which your situation may be resolved!

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

In observance of the Presidents Day holiday, the Parish Office will be **closed on Monday, February 19.**



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will take place each Friday evening during Lent at 6:30 PM in Newton. **A Soup Supper will follow Stations on March 22.**

LENTEN EVENING PRAYER

Evening Prayer is sung at Newton at 6:00 PM on all Sundays of Lent. Join us for a quiet time of prayer and reflection. The **Sacrament of Reconciliation** is available immediately after Evening Prayer each Sunday of the Lenten Season.



END OF LIFE PLANNING

Three Beliefs is a document from the Diocese of Manchester that gives valuable assistance to Catholics and others on end-of-life issues. *Three Beliefs* explains Catholic teaching on life-sustaining treatment and care and includes the New Hampshire Advance Directive form modified in such a way to make it consistent with both Catholic teaching and New Hampshire law. *Three Beliefs* contains a helpful FAQ section and wallet cards that include important information for healthcare providers.

The New Hampshire Advance Directive form was revised by a law that is consistent with Catholic teaching and the changes to the New Hampshire form. If you completed an advance directive before 2021 and your intentions for your end-of-life care have not changed, you do not need to complete a new form as long as your advance directive was valid when it was executed. For example, if you completed the October 2007 version of *Three Beliefs* and signed the document before two witnesses or a notary public or justice of the peace, you do not need to complete a new advance directive form.

Copies of *Three Beliefs* are available at the church entrance. También están disponibles ediciones en Español.

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.

✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

Sunday, February 18

10:00 AM Religious Ed – Grades K to 6 *Plaistow*
 6:00 PM Evening Prayer *Newton*
 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Newton*

Monday, February 19
PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

Tuesday, February 20

6:00 PM Finance Council Meeting *Plaistow*

Wednesday, February 21

Holy Angels Church Open All Day For Prayer

7:00 PM Disciples On The Journey *Plaistow*
 7:00 PM St. Luke's Outreach Ministry *Plaistow*

Thursday, February 22

8:30 AM – 8:30 PM Eucharistic Adoration *Newton*
 1:30 PM Disciples On The Journey *Plaistow*

Friday, February 23

6:30 PM Stations of the Cross *Newton*

Saturday, February 24

3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *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.



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

The Vigil Light in front of the Blessed Mother icon at Mary Mother of the Church will burn this week in loving memory of **Marcia Gallant** by William Tucker



The Sanctuary Light at Holy Angels Church will burn this week in loving memory of **Deceased Members of the Tucker Family** by William Tucker

✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

Saturday, February 17 ~ First Sunday of Lent

Gn 9:8-15; 1 Pt 3:18-22; Mk 1:12-15 (Vigil)
 4:00 PM Jesselyn and Donald Driscoll by the McKinney family *Plaistow*

Sunday, February 18 ~ First Sunday of Lent

Gn 9:8-15; 1 Pt 3:18-22; Mk 1:12-15
 8:00 AM Suzanne Busch (Birthday Remembrance) by Jim Edwards *Newton*
 10:00 AM Sr. Elizabeth Ann Lee, ofsf by Charlie and Lisa Angwin *Plaistow*

Monday, February 19 ~ Lenten Weekday

Lv 19:1-2, 11-18; Mt 25:31-46
 8:00 AM People of the Parish *Newton*

Tuesday, February 20 ~ Lenten Weekday

Is 55:10-11; Mt 6:7-15
 8:00 AM Arlene Hartford by her cousin Pat *Plaistow*

Wednesday, February 21 ~ Peter Damian, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Jon 3:1-10; Lk 11:29-32
 6:30 PM Suzanne Busch by Mike and Nancy Edwards *Plaistow*

Thursday, February 22 ~ The Chair of Peter the Apostle

1 Pt 5:1-4; Mt 16:13-19
 8:00 AM All Souls Intentions *Newton*

Friday, February 23 ~ Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr

Ez 18:21-28; Mt 5:20-26
No Mass

Saturday, February 24 ~ Lenten Weekday

Dt 26:16-19; Mt 5:43-48 (Day)
Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18; Rom 8:31b-34; Mk 9:2-10 (Vigil)
 4:00 PM The Intentions of Eleanor Martin by Edwin and Susan Martin *Plaistow*

Sunday, February 25 ~ Second Sunday of Lent

Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18; Rom 8:31b-34; Mk 9:2-10
 8:00 AM Linda Trevillion by Barbara and Jack Brotz *Newton*
 10:00 AM John Francis Lyons (1st Anniversary) by Gerard Lyons *Plaistow*





WELCOME IN CHRIST!

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish invites all to a deeper love of Jesus and to a fullness of communion with the Church. The **rites of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA)** is a process where adults and older children are welcomed into the Catholic Church. Some have never been Baptized, others never received Eucharist or

Confirmation, and others arrive at our door after a long faith journey.

Do you know someone who is thinking about becoming part of our Catholic community? Are you the non-Catholic spouse of a parishioner who is wondering about full communion with the Church? Are you an adult Catholic who for whatever reason, “missed” one or more of the sacraments of initiation while growing up? Do you have children over 7 years of age who were never Baptized, or older children who “missed” sacraments?

The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (and its adapted form for children) welcomes all kinds of people into the Catholic family. The RCIA is for any adult who is unbaptized and recognizes a need for spirituality in their life, or Baptized and raised in another Christian tradition but interested in learning about the Catholic faith, or Baptized in the Catholic faith, but never received any formal religious training.

Children of all ages are welcome and participate in age appropriate meetings for their RCIA experience.

Contact Father Albert or Cathy Smith in the Parish Office at 603.382.8324 for more information.

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 jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net. If you’re new to our parish, registration forms are available at the entrances of both churches.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Parents – Please mark your calendars and save these dates!

St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Plaistow, NH invites children to attend **SCUBA Vacation Bible Camp from June 17 to June 21, 2024.**

Kids will participate in memorable Bible-learning activities, sing catchy songs, play teamwork-building game, engage in fun snack eating experiences, take part in one-of-a-kind Bible Adventures, collect Bible Memory Buddies to remind them to trust Jesus, and each day make a craft to take home and play with all summer.

SCUBA Vacation Bible Camp is for kids from age 4 to 12 and will run from 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon each day. For more information, call Joyce at 603-382-8324, ext. 303.

ADORERS NEEDED AT 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 is a great source of grace for us as a parish family. We have many who have made the commitment to spend an hour each week with our Eucharistic Lord. Adoration takes place each Thursday in Newton from 8:30 AM to 8:30 PM. We also need people at all times so we can have 2 people at each hour. 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 a 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.

HOLY ANGELS CEMETERY CLOSED

Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow is closed from December 2023 until Spring 2024. 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.

✦ 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 Szczapa jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
 Jackie Tremblay jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
 Val Barczak mvmbarczak@comcast.net
 Parish Council parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net



MONTHLY FOOD DRIVE

**Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus
St. Jude Council #6617**

The Knights of Columbus and Saint Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry would like to thank our parishioners for the ongoing support to feed those in need. Over the last two months, support has been provided to 135 families. That represents 118 children under the age of 18 and 111 adults over the age of 60, for a total of 370 individuals served. Shopping lists and bags are provided on the 3rd week of every month with the general collection of non-perishable items happening the following (4th) weekend. Food donations can also be left in the plastic totes at the rear of either church or brought to the Parish Office any time they are open. Prefer not to shop? Gift cards or checks can be made out to Saint Luke Food Pantry anytime. Your generosity and support are greatly appreciated!

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
HAPPENINGS**

This month, the Knights donated \$2,500 to assist our Parish with the purchase of a copier/printer. We are currently planning for our 2024 St. Jude Golf Open which will be held in early June. This year's Open will help a single mother who suffered a severe stroke and another single mother who is raising two daughters with severe medical issues.

Website: www.kofc6617.org

We are always looking for help. If you would like to help or want more information on the Knights, contact Peter Richards at 603-382-4315 or pmrps6@comcast.net.

**THE KNIGHTS OF
COLUMBUS
ST. JUDE COUNCIL
#6617**



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

A Men's AA Step Meeting is 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.

CURSILLO

If you have a desire to know Jesus more closely, a Cursillo is for you. The Cursillo weekend is a short course in Christianity. The purpose of the weekend is to facilitate a meaningful personal encounter with Christ and his body, the Church. Cursillo weekends are being offered at the Sarto Center in Hookset, NH. To find out more, contact Mark Collopy at 603-833-7341 or explore www.nhcursillo.org.

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.**

CURSILLO

If you have a desire to know Jesus more closely, a Cursillo is for you. The Cursillo weekend is a short course in Christianity. The purpose of the weekend is to facilitate a meaningful personal encounter with Christ and his body, the Church. The three day weekend is also the bridge connecting the faithful with the supportive post-Cursillo community, where we live our faith joyfully with our fellow Christians. Cursillo weekends are being offered at the Sarto Center in Hookset, NH. To find out more, contact Mark Collopy at 603-833-7341 or explore www.nhcursillo.org.

**ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
HIGH SCHOOL
DOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

OPEN HOUSE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22
6:00-7:30PM →
SCAN NOW TO REGISTER!
SEE THE DIFFERENCE.



Lenten Prayer and Liturgy

The Church invites all people to special moments of prayer during the season of Lent. It is a common custom for people to make room in their schedule for daily Eucharist, which we celebrate as follows during the Lenten season:

Monday	8 am	Newton
Tuesday	8 am	Plaistow
Wednesday	6:30 PM	Plaistow
Thursday	8 am	Newton

Another Lenten custom involves taking a journey... to the Holy Land! Going on pilgrimage has always been an important part of our Christian tradition. By visiting a place where a religious event occurred, a pilgrim hoped to share in the experience associated with that place. The desire to visit Jerusalem and the Holy Land was very important to Christians long ago, but because of the danger and expense of travel, and the political climate of Palestine, such a journey was not always feasible. When the Friars of the Franciscan Order took over the care of the Holy Places in Jerusalem in 1342, they began to erect "Stations" in Churches back home in Europe. It was a way to "go" to the Holy Land without ever leaving home. The custom of the Stations quickly spread to parish Churches, and the devotion of the Stations of the Cross was born.

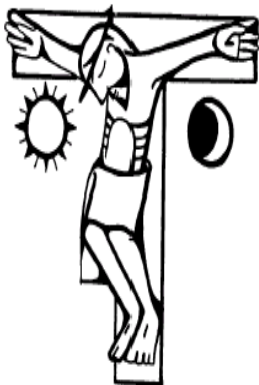


Praying the Stations of the cross

We walk the **Stations of the Cross** each **Friday of Lent** at **6:30** at **NEWTON**. Using various versions and forms of the Stations, and led by various groups in the Parish, we make Jesus' journey to the Cross our own. Our Lenten Soup Supper will be held following Stations on Friday, March 31

Baptismal Font and Holy Water Font

During Lent, we pray and prepare to renew our own Baptismal promises even as we pray as a community for those to be Baptized. Following ancient custom, the Sacrament of Baptism is not ordinarily celebrated during Lent, and the Baptismal Font itself is sealed. We also "fast" from the Baptismal water usually present at the doors of the Church. The entire Church waits with Jesus in the desert, praying for the Living Waters of Easter.



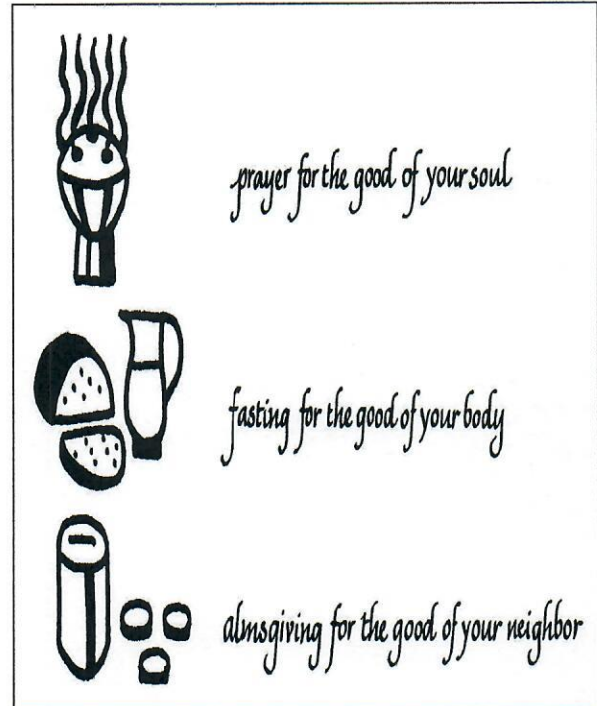
Lenten Space, Silence, & Music

During Lent, the Church's lighting is dimmed so as to encourage an atmosphere of prayer and introspection. Our Assembly's music is more meditative and somber.

We leave at the end of Mass in silence, reflecting on our mission as Disciples to pray, fast, and to give of ourselves in the coming week.

The Church asks us to give ourselves to prayer and to the reading of Scripture, to fasting and to giving of alms during the Lenten season. The fasting that all do together on Fridays is but a sign of the daily Lenten discipline of individuals and households: fasting for certain periods of time, fasting from certain foods, but also fasting from other things and activities. Likewise, the giving of alms is some effort to share this world equally not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and possessions and through work of many kinds for a just world.

FASTING means that anyone between the ages of 18 and 59 may eat only one full meal (with the other 2 meals being distinctly smaller). One may, however, enter more into the spiritual element of fasting and not partake of any meals at all. One fasts for a spiritual reason - (an end to sin, a reconciliation in one's life or family, an end to war or other disturbance, or for the spread of the Gospel or personal/corporate conversion) than for a personal dietary goal. **The Church requires all between the ages of 18 and 59 to observe the fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fridays and Wednesdays are also traditional fast days, but are not mandatory.**



ABSTINENCE is the discipline for those age 14 or older to **forego the eating of any meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all Fridays of Lent.**

The **EASTER DUTY** is the **obligation to receive Holy Eucharist** between the First Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday.

The **Sacrament of Reconciliation** is an **obligation** for all those who are conscious of grave sin. A frequent celebration of Reconciliation is encouraged for all, especially during the Lenten Season.

Reconciliation is celebrated at Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish on Saturdays at 3:00 at Plaistow, and on the Sundays of Lent following 6:00 PM Evening Prayer at Newton. There are communal Lenten Reconciliation Services at St. Michael, Exeter on Sunday, March 17 at 3 PM and at Mary, Queen of Peace, Salem on Sunday, March 17 at 2 PM.



Bringing Home the Word

First Sunday of Lent (B)
February 18, 2024

Lost at Sea

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

We often think that Lent is a time to concentrate on the sufferings of Jesus. Actually, that is the theme of Holy Week. The other readings of Lent suggest another theme—covenant-making. God initiates an intimate relationship with us and calls us to be faithful. This is the good news. Moreover, when we are unfaithful, God gives us another chance.

The first reading recounts God’s graciousness in saving humankind from destruction. Noah and his family must have felt that they really were lost at sea. However, God’s protection was always

there. In fact, the waters they so feared were destructive only to what was evil. They had been saved and now, through the covenant, all of creation was given a second chance.

One might think that Jesus wouldn’t have struggled with temptation. After all, he was God. However, today’s Gospel says that he was tempted. He was in the wilderness, a place long known to be a place of temptation because there the supports of normal life are gone. After forty days of fasting, one’s defenses would be significantly weakened, if not broken down. In such a situation, the primary thought is survival. This Gospel does not describe the temptation itself, but it does present Jesus as someone like us—weakened, tempted, and perhaps even “lost at sea.” However, God’s protection was with him, in the guise of angels.

Both stories assure us that God’s covenantal care is there supporting us, regardless of the difficulty or our apparent weakness. †

Sunday Readings

Genesis 9:8–15

[God said,] “I set my bow in the clouds to serve as a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.”

1 Peter 3:18–22

[Baptism] is not a removal of dirt from the body but an appeal to God for a clear conscience.

Mark 1:12–15

[Jesus said,] “This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

God initiates an intimate relationship with us and calls us to be faithful. This is the good news.

A Word from Pope Francis

True happiness and true freedom are not found in possessing, but in sharing; not in taking advantage of others, but in loving them; not in the obsession of power, but in the joy of service....Let us take time for silence and prayer — just a little, it will do us good....

ANGELUS, ROME, MARCH 6, 2022



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Where do you look for God when life seems unfair?
- Do you ask for the grace to resist temptation?

What Do I Truly Value?

Paula D'Arcy

Years ago I took voice lessons from an acclaimed musician. He was well-known and highly regarded for his talents, and the lessons were a generous gift. At the time we were both on the faculty of the same college. I scheduled these lessons in between appointments with my students and I was late for my lesson. I could have been on time, actually, but the first time I stopped to speak briefly with another faculty member, the second time I delayed to make a phone call that wasn't critical. The third time my friend said to me, "If you were paying for this hour, you wouldn't be late."

The words stung. I knew he was right, and I instantly saw that my tardiness reflected the value I placed on the opportunity he was offering. I felt ashamed and was never late again. I did value the gift.



Sometimes I remember that moment in regard to my own inner journey. I hear a voice in a whisper, "If you really saw the gift of life you've been given, you wouldn't throw it away." It jolts me from a preoccupation with a thousand peripheral things. It makes me aware of how my default position in life easily

becomes my comfort, my ease, my desire to be appreciated and loved.

For a time I stayed in a European town that was founded in 1338. I walked toward a small stone church on a path that others have walked for centuries. At night I listened to the stories of these villagers, remembrances of fearful years lived under a communist occupation. Outwardly they learned to appear faithful to the government's avowed atheism, safety depending upon this pretense. Children were taught to repeat the lies as well. But their hearts and souls knew differently, and at Easter they closed the curtains and spoke truth in whispers.

"How did you keep joy alive?" I asked. "When you see the value of being alive," one woman answered slowly, "when you know the value of life itself—there is joy." She smiles. "Life is the greatest gift." I wonder: Do I value what I say I value? †

Source: *Daybreaks: Daily Reflections for Lent and Easter*, 2007

Wisdom from Catholic UPDATE

Excerpt from *Lent: Giving Our Hearts to God* by Joyce Rupp, OSM

I used to dread Lent. Then one year it finally dawned on me that this liturgical season gives me a focused opportunity to rearrange my spiritual priorities. Lent helps me gain clarity on how I am living my daily life. It is so easy to get swallowed up by the constant busyness and hectic pace of life. Lent helps me step back for six weeks and look more closely at how I am relating to God and to see who I am becoming. I realize that there is still a part of my heart that forgets, refuses, procrastinates, fears, or is unaware of how much it needs to reflect the goodness of God. †

Catholic Update is a practical and affordable four-page newsletter that explores Catholic teaching and tradition on contemporary topics in easy-to-understand language.

To subscribe, visit Liguori.org or call 800-325-9526.



So that we may enter this season of Lent with minds open to hear your word, and hearts open to the promise of Easter, we pray—
Lord, let us be like you.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

February 19–24

Monday, Lenten Weekday:
Lv 19:1–2, 11–18 / Mt 25:31–46
Tuesday, Lenten Weekday:
Is 55:10–11 / Mt 6:7–15
Wednesday, Lenten Weekday:
Jon 3:1–10 / Lk 11:29–32

Thursday, Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle:
1 Pt 5:1–4 / Mt 16:13–19
Friday, Lenten Weekday:
Ez 18:21–28 / Mt 5:20–26
Saturday, Lenten Weekday:
Dt 26:16–19 / Mt 5:43–48